

Hafa Adai!

Underground power system estimated to cost \$68M. **PAGE 3**

Monique Sablan selected to helm Cannabis Commission. **PAGE 4**

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# Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 230

www.saipantribune.com

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2019

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## Lien sought on IPI resort

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

**A** former contractor of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC says the casino operator owes it more than \$5 million and wants the federal court to place a mechanic's lien on the company's hotel-casino project in Garapan and on the land that it sits on.

Pacific Rim Land Development LLC, through its lawyer, Colin Thompson, filed its notice of lien before the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Tuesday.

A mechanic's lien refers to a se-

See **LIEN** on **Page 4**

## 2 core PSS staff resign

By **MARC A. VENUS**  
marc\_venus@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Two core staff of the Public School System are resigning.

PSS legal counsel Ryan Meyerhoff and PSS Facilities Development and Management director Rachel Fusco have both tendered their resignations.

Meyerhoff submitted his resignation letter to the CNMI Board of Education and to the office of then-Education commissioner Glenn Muña last Sept. 27; his final day will

See **PSS** on **Page 4**



### RESTORING TREES

Saipan International School students plant native trees on the shoreline of Micro Beach in Garapan yesterday as part of the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance's "Bring Back Our Trees" campaign.

IVA MAURIN

See story  
on **Page 9**

## LV fugitive arrested at airport

» **Defendant wanted for theft, fraud involving casino gambling debt**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A man wanted in Las Vegas, Ne-

vada since 2013 for theft and fraud related to a casino gambling debt was arrested as soon as he arrived at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Thursday.

Da Gong Jiang, 56, a Chinese national, was brought before Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho yesterday afternoon

See **FUGITIVE** on **Page 4**

## WITH 'DEPARTURE' OF 18 CW WORKERS Manpower shortage at CUC power division

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s Power Generation Division is facing a manpower shortage after 17 of their long-term Filipino workers were given plane tickets to exit the CNMI, while one passed away on Saipan.

Saipan Tribune learned that with the "departure" of the 18, including one from Rota, CUC's Power Generation Division will be down to 74 employees, including division manager Richard Cano.

CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho believes, though, that the

See **MANPOWER** on **Page 4**

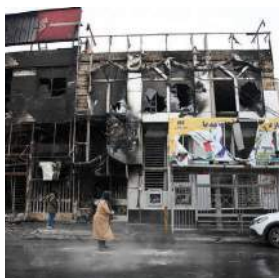
## INSIDE



### ASIA

The U.S. defense chief urges a 'very public posture' on Chinese sea claims.

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### WORLD

Amnesty International says that government crackdown has killed at least 106 in Iran.

**PAGE 18**



### LIFE & STYLE

Joshua Dela Cruz has gone from having a genie as a sidekick to a bright blue puppy.

**PAGE 20**



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# Local

## Torres: More talks needed on live-fire training

By ERWIN ENCINARES  
erwin\_encinares@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who has just come from Hawaii where he led a CNMI delegation in meetings with military officials and on-site demonstrations of military trainings, said that more discussions are required to ensure that both the

U.S. military and the CNMI can benefit from the live-fire trainings being proposed for the CNMI.

In a statement issued Tuesday, Torres gave a summary of his meetings in Hawaii at the Schofield Barracks Army Base and at the Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Oahu and at the Pohakuloa Training Area

on the Big Island—all at the invitation of the U.S. Department of Defense.

“The first-hand observations provided a better understanding of the military’s proposals for [Tinian and Pagan], as well as the environmental, social, and economic effects of the types of training involved for the armed force readiness,”

Torres stated.

Aside from Torres, the CNMI delegation was also composed of Senate President Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota), Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan), Tinian and Aguiguan Mayor Edwin Aldan, Northern Islands Mayor Vicente B. Santos, along with members of the Tinian and Aguiguan

Municipal Council, and members of the Commonwealth Ports Authority board.

“I was pleased to learn of the rules imposed by federal and state regulations on the DoD in the course of carrying out training exercises,” Torres said, adding that there are standard procedures that are followed for pre-training activities, training, and post-training activities and involve

experts on-site.

“We are very concerned with potential effects on our islands and on the welfare of our people. This requires a lot more discussions to ensure a mutually beneficial outcome while preserving our cultural values and way of life,” he noted.

Torres and the delegation were in Hawaii in early October 2019. Press secretary Kevin Bautista told *Saipan Tribune* in a previous statement that the governor was attending meetings on behalf of the CNMI.

## Govt directed to focus on dengue prevention

By ERWIN ENCINARES  
erwin\_encinares@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

With zero locally-acquired dengue infections and only two cases of imported dengue in the CNMI, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres wants to make sure that the disease doesn’t gain a foothold here. In a directive yesterday, Torres instructed the entire CNMI government to help the Commonwealth Health Care Corp. in its efforts to prevent the spread of dengue in the CNMI.

Noting that there had already been multiple outbreaks of dengue throughout the Pacific region affecting Guam, the Philippines, Palau, Yap, and the Marshall Islands, Torres pointed out that the CNMI has had only two cases of imported dengue so far and he said all efforts must be done to keep it that way.

Imported cases refer to instances of dengue that were acquired off-island while locally-acquired cases refer to instances of patients contracting dengue on island.

“As we have learned through the two confirmed imported cases, our remoteness from the U.S. mainland makes medical management of severe dengue especially challenging,” Torres noted in Directive 2020-002. “Therefore, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and I strongly support [CHCC’s] multi-pronged ap-

proach at preventing returning travelers from transmitting the virus in the CNMI and protecting those residents living in congregate areas who are most at risk and lacking in the means to protect themselves and their families.”

“I hereby direct all CNMI agencies to mobilize and exert available resources into working with CHCC and our federal partners in a concerted

## Drug Court staff hone knowledge

Personnel of the NMI Judiciary’s Drug Court met at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan last Nov. 15, for a team workshop that focused on the growth and efficacy of drug courts in servicing the needs of the community with addiction treatment and recovery.

Team members shared the lessons they learned from attending the last National Association of Drug Court Professionals annual training. Treatment providers then gave training on their services and model of operation and how they apply to Drug Court participants.

Through collaborative efforts, Drug Court staff, led by Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio and Drug Court manager Edward Diaz, focused on evolving drug court policies and procedures, improving the participant handbook, and

effort to control and prevent the widespread outbreak of the dengue virus in the Commonwealth,” Torres said.

Dengue is spread through mosquito bites.

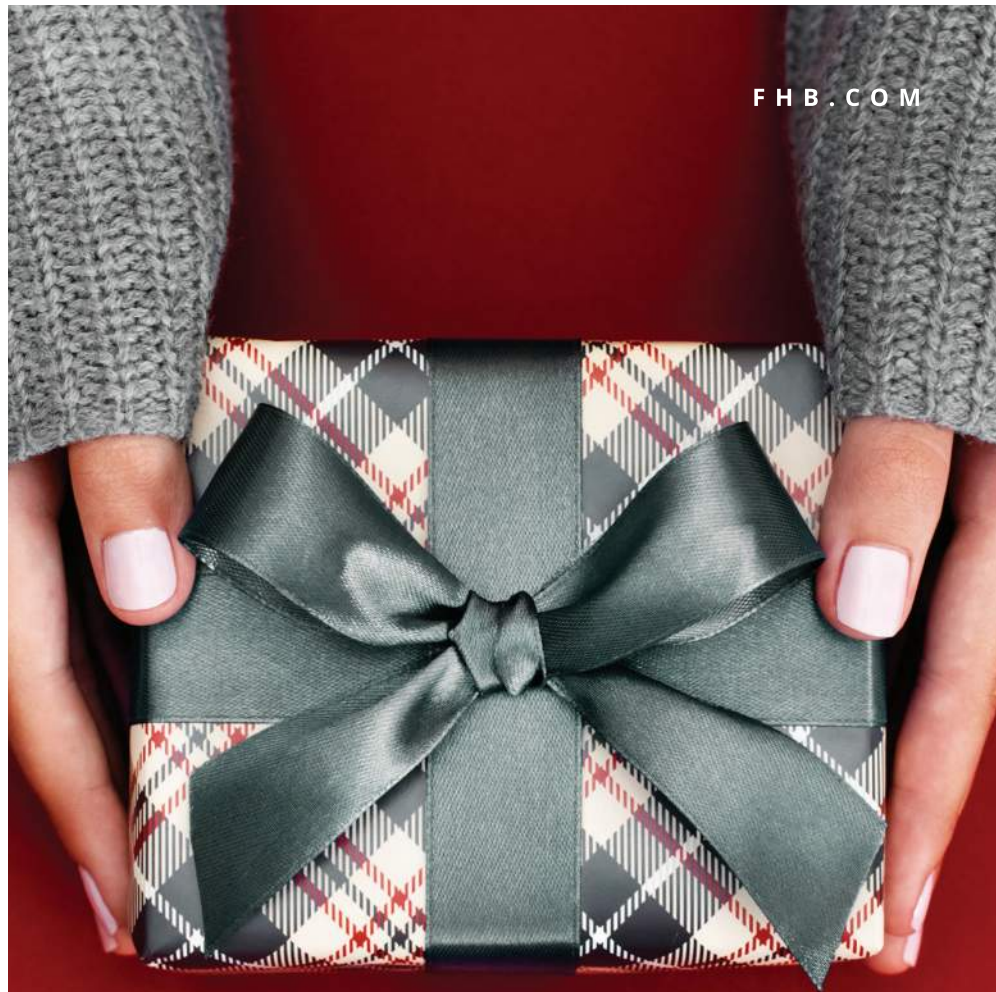
The governor noted that, with recovery efforts still ongoing for Super Typhoon Yutu, typhoon-related debris that collects standing water could lead to more mosquitoes since they reproduce in stagnant water.

modifying program tracks and phases to better respond to current demands.

After the workshop, Diaz said, “[The] Drug Court is always looking for ways to improve the program, and this workshop is one of many activities that are planned ahead.” Highlighting the contributions of team members during the workshop, Diaz described their contributions as “multidisciplinary” and “invaluable.”

With Drug Court now on its third year, this workshop gave Drug Court staff an opportunity to evaluate the efficacy of the program. As the Drug Court continues to grow and evolve, it shall continue to serve the community to the best of its capabilities.

For more information on Drug Court, contact Diaz at (670) 235-3784. (PR)



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# Underground power system estimated to cost \$68M

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

From an initial estimate of \$30 million, the plan to bury power lines that supply power to critical sections of the CNMI such as the Saipan hospital and airport is now estimated to cost more than double that.

According to Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Gary P. Camacho last Tuesday, CUC's plan to bury sections of the power system on Saipan and Tinian to protect them from being damaged by strong typhoons is estimated to cost \$68 million.

The plan alone to install an underground cable from Power Plant 1 in Lower Base to the Commonwealth Health Center has an estimated cost of \$23 million, he said.

The plan to put an underground cable from CUC's substation in Chalan Kiya to the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport has an estimated cost of \$43 million, he added.

On Tinian, the plan to have an underground power cable from the power plant to the Tinian Health Center has an estimated cost of \$2 million.

Camacho said the Federal Emergency Management Agency is funding the study on the costs and feasibility of the project. It was not immediately clear if these costs already include purchasing the right-of-way for these buried power lines when they go through private properties.

Whether FEMA will be willing to foot the bill for this project remains a big question but CUC is keeping its fingers crossed. "We are hopeful to get support from FEMA on this critical area of our power supply system," Camacho said.

As to the project's status, CUC is right now doing the cost-benefit study or analysis, which is being coordinated through the Office of the Governor's Authorized Representative Office. He said with a contractor under GAR and CUC, they are putting together the project to understand the cost benefit.

Camacho said right now they are just reviewing the design and the cost benefit analysis of the program.

He said there has been no request for proposal to bid out the actual work for the installation of the underground cable.

Camacho earlier stated that they are aggressively pushing the underground power system project to ensure that Saipan and Tinian will have the capability for emergencies during typhoons.

The underground power system is part of the CNMI's mitigation project in the wake of Super Typhoon Yutu's devastation on Saipan and Tinian in October 2018.

The previous estimate of the project was \$30 million.



**Camacho**

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# Monique Sablan selected to helm Cannabis Commission

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**  
erwin\_encinares@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

After about two months of searching, the CNMI Cannabis Commission finally announced last Tuesday its selection of Monique Sablan as its first managing director.

Sablan was selected among 13 applicants, according to Cannabis Commission chair Nadine Deleon Guerrero in a statement.

"Although we had a talented pool of applicants during our search, the commission felt [Sablan] was the perfect fit for the position," she said in a statement. "[She] is an active volunteer and is a well-respected member of the community. She has demonstrated leadership skills through various successful program implementations, and with her skillset, knowledge and strong network, [Sablan] has what

it takes to lead this industry forward."

"The commission has full confidence that she will exceed expectations as we continue the establishment of the CNMI's newest industry," she added.

Sablan noted in a statement that the CNMI's cannabis industry, although still in its infancy, can reap a variety of economic benefits such as new job opportunities, revenue

generation, and even attract potential investors.

"...It establishes that authority to closely regulate the [use] of cannabis in the CNMI. I believe communication is key and I look forward to ensuring that our operations are fair and efficient," Sablan said.

Sablan served as the special assistant for the Youth Affairs Office, where she oversaw and managed the daily operations of multiple youth centers

within the CNMI. She was also the CNMI Scholarship Office workforce program coordinator and public information officer.

One of her goals as managing director is to ensure that the "...youth [have] the proper and thorough educational understanding of this new industry and why it's important to abide by its access restrictions."

"I also look forward to providing the same type of training to ensure that adults are using responsibly through adhering to regulations and the

law," she added.

Sablan has a degree in English with a minor in humanities and law from the University of California Irvine.

Among other responsibilities, Sablan is also a newly elected board member of the Marianas Young Professionals. She also served as committee chair of the Marianas March Against Cancer in 2018 and 2019 and is a former Human Resources & Administration Learning & Development supervisor and public relations liaison for Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC.

## Minority reviewing position on impeachment

By **ERWIN ENCINARES**  
erwin\_encinares@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The House minority bloc led by Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) is still weighing their position on possible impeachment proceedings against Gov. Ralph DLG Torres amid federal investigations, while House vice speaker Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) believes it is best to conclude the judicial process first before acting.

Propst told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that a statement from the House minority bloc, which is also composed of Reps. Sheila Babauta (Ind-Saipan), Cristina Sablan (Ind-Saipan), Donald Manglona (Ind-Rota), and Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), would be forthcoming.

"I am still working with the minority members in coming up with a unified statement

to address these concerns," he said, adding that some members of the House minority bloc are currently off-island.

Sablan noted in a previous interview that the Legislature has the authority to investigate other branches of the government—including the Executive Branch—as provided by the CNMI Constitution.

"Any impeachment process, should we come to that, would be separate from the criminal process, though evidence that is presented in criminal proceeding may be examined by the Legislature as well," she had said.

Torres' chief of staff, Angel Demapan, said that premature talks of impeachment are "self-aggrandizing" and "po-

litical posturing."

"...The idea is purely politically driven and premised on self-aggrandizing motives," he said.

Propst told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview yesterday that being in the minority means they "are free to speak from their hearts and say whatever they feel."

"We want to come out with a unified statement—one that we [the minority bloc] all agree to on all terms. That is forthcoming," he added.

Deleon Guerrero said he would be more comfortable in taking action once the investigation findings are made public.

"I don't think we should be talking about [impeachment]," he told *Saipan Tribune*. "It is all allegations and nothing is

founded. There are no grounds at this point. It is very premature," he said.

Deleon Guerrero noted that when impeachment proceedings were filed against former governor Benigno R. Fitial, ultimately resulting in his resignation, charges were already brought against him.

"We must let the process go through. Let the judicial system go through. It's only an investigation and nothing has been proven," he said.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation executed search warrants all over Saipan last Nov. 7, 2019 through Nov. 8, 2019.

The FBI, along with the CNMI Office of the Public Auditor, also visited the Commonwealth Casino Commission Tuesday. CCC executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero did not disclose the reason for their visit.

» **Vice speaker: Let the investigation process conclude**

## FUGITIVE

From Page 1

after the Office of the Attorney General filed an extradition case against him.

Bruce Berline appeared as private counsel for Jiang. Chief prosecutor John Bradley appeared for the CNMI government.

Camacho retained the \$346,839 cash bail that Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio initially imposed in issuing a fugitive arrest warrant against Jiang last Tuesday.

Camacho set an identification hearing/status conference for Nov. 27 at 10am.

Berline said there could be a way to resolve the mat-

ter but they are willing for now to attend the identification hearing.

Bradley said a preliminary hearing does not apply in this case.

According to court documents, it was U.S. Customs Border Protection officer Mark Anthony Butac who found out that Jiang is a fugitive from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department in the State of Nevada.

CBP officer Ronald Atalig Muña stated in his declaration that Jiang arrived Thursday at the airport and, while being processed, Butac found out that there was an outstanding arrest warrant against him.

The arrest warrant was issued on July 22, 2013, charg-

ing Jiang with fraud-insufficient funds check.

Muña said the Clerk County District Attorney's Office asked that Jiang be extradited to Nevada.

A \$346,839 cash bail is currently set in the Nevada arrest warrant.

Muña said the date of birth on Jiang's passport matches the date of birth on the arrest warrant.

Muña said the information about Jiang was sent via fax to the U.S. CBP Office of Field Operations, Saipan from Las Vegas Metro Police Department.

In a later interview, Bradley said that Jiang is wanted on charges of theft and fraud involving \$346,839 related to some sort of casino gambling

debt. Bradley said he does not have details about the case in Nevada as it happened several years ago.

Bradley said Jiang arrived on Saipan with his wife from China for a vacation here and that Jiang's passport and fingerprints triggered an electronic red flag about a warrant in Nevada.

When asked about the CNMI government's next step, Bradley said they need additional paperwork from Nevada so they can agree to release him so Nevada comes and takes him there to be prosecuted.

"I will now be communicating with Nevada to make sure that we get that. We have to get what is called a governor's warrant," Bradley said.

Rim entered into a written contract with IPI to build the Imperial Pacific Resort in Garapan.

Thompson said Pacific Rim substantially completed or completed the agreed upon construction work on Sept. 30, 2018.

The lawyer said IPI, however, failed to pay the company in full for the work performed and materials supplied despite due demand.

Garapan, where Pacific Rim incorporated materials and provided labor for the hotel-casino complex.

Thompson said the lands in the hotel-casino complex include those from the Department of Public Lands, Commonwealth Investment Co. Inc., the Arriolas, Joaquin LG Sablan, and J.C. Tenorio Enterprises Inc.

On Feb. 13, 2018, Pacific

\$10 million in damages that would be proven at trial.

Pacific Rim is suing IPI and five unnamed alleged co-conspirators for breach of contract (construction and promissory note), and unjust enrichment.

According to Thompson in the notice of lien, Imperial Pacific Properties LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of IPI and owns all leasehold interests in real property in

## MANPOWER

From Page 1

remaining staff with Cano can deal with the problem.

The 18 Filipino workers were mechanics, electricians, and operators.

Camacho said yesterday that they are advertising the vacant positions as required by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"We go through the process. If there are qualified U.S. citizens, they will be hired. If [there is no one], we will have to do the alternative [which] is [to hire] CW [workers]," he said.

CW is the employment visa given to foreign workers in the Commonwealth.

Last Tuesday, Camacho said the departing CW workers have already been given their plane tickets.

He said that CUC is not closing its doors to these 18 workers in the event that no U.S. citizens or green card holders apply for their posi-

tions. He stated that USCIS says that they have to advertise the positions of those CW workers.

"We have to comply with all the federal requirements," Camacho said.

He said they need to fill the vacant positions with qualified U.S. citizens but, if nobody applies, they need to fill those posts with qualified CW workers.

"But they [have] to be qualified. It's a very dangerous and hazardous program," Camacho said.

*Saipan Tribune* learned that the Filipino workers have been with CUC from six years to 27 years. The 17 were assigned on Saipan and one on Rota.

Edwin Gilboy, who worked for 27 years on Saipan, passed away last Oct. 19.

The workers' last day to stay in the CNMI was last Oct. 31. Their departure schedule was last Nov. 8.

*Saipan Tribune* learned that, as of Tuesday, only one U.S. citizen has applied for the vacant posts.

## PSS

From Page 1

be on Dec. 6. Meyerhoff cited personal matters as his reason for resigning.

"I'm heading back to California on Dec. 7. My contract was nearing an end and I'm closing in on four years in the CNMI. My time with PSS has been enjoyable and rewarding, but four years is enough time for me to be so far removed from family and friends in California," Meyerhoff told *Saipan Tribune* in an email.

Meyerhoff and Tiberius Mocanu serve as the legal counsel for BOE and PSS/COE, but Meyerhoff focused, generally, on PSS while Mocanu focused on BOE matters. Meyerhoff was assigned with the Commonwealth Law Revision Commission from April 2016 to 2018 and with PSS since April 2018.

*Saipan Tribune* learned

from a source that Fusco resigned last Nov. 7, and her last day will be on Jan. 10, 2020. The source said she also cited personal reasons for leaving.

Fusco and other PSS officials worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in assessing school damage after Super Typhoon Yutu hit Saipan and Tinian in October 2018. Fusco oversaw the construction of the temporary campus for Hopwood Middle School at nearby Kobleville Elementary School.

Meyerhoff and Fusco's resignations serve as the third and fourth key resignations since September, the first being then-PSS Finance and Budget director Christopher Ching and the second being previous Education commissioner Glenn Muña.

Ching resigned from PSS just days before Muña turned in his resignation letter to the BOE. Both cited personal reasons for leaving PSS.

## LIEN

From Page 1

curity interest in the title to property for the benefit of those who have supplied labor or materials that improve the property.

Thompson said the unpaid amount that is owed Pacific Rim is \$5.65 million but it wants to collect from IPI approximately



## Cybersecurity firm to set up operations on Saipan

A U.S.-based cybersecurity company is set to launch a Security Operations Center on Saipan in January 2020, beginning with the hiring of 15 information security analysts.

This development, which is being brokered by the CNMI Department of Commerce, the CNMI Department of Labor and the Latte Training Academy Inc., is being touted as the start of the cybersecurity industry in the CNMI.

"The firm reached out to the Latte Training Academy through its affiliation with CompTIA and began discussions on the ability to support its need for entry level information security analysts. These positions are intended to serve as frontline network

analysts for the firm's clients. Given the security concerns of their customer base, the organization has opted to open a CNMI location rather than outsource the work. The need to source a U.S. labor market was a key component to their interest in the CNMI, but our geographic location on the opposite side of the international dateline was beneficial as it allows them to provide coverage to supplement their U.S. offices" said LTA director Ed Arriola Jr.

The firm does require that applicants are at least 18 years of age at the time of application and have attained their CompTIA certification through the Latte Training Academy. The organization

will hire qualified candidates on a full-time basis and offers career progression, which may require relocation to various client locations throughout the United States and Europe. The CNMI Security Operations Center team will be on-island the week of Dec. 9, 2019 for a site visit and meetings with potential candidates referred to them through the Latte Training Academy.

"This is truly an exciting opportunity for the CNMI to develop a clean industry which can serve as a proof of concept for others in the tech indus-

try. We are not expecting that this will be to the scale of the typical Information Technology offshore operations, but rather a clean and sustainable emerging industry. With the redundancy of our fiber optic cables from both Docomo Pacific and IT&E, it is fantastic opportunity to leverage our workforce to engage in the future of the global economy," said Commerce Secretary Mark Rabauliman.

At the onset of discussions, the firm was presented with the opportunity to establish itself as a partner of the Department of Labor WIOA and U.S.DOL Apprenticeship program. As the CNMI's Depart-

ment of Labor is leading the way to establish an apprenticeship program in the jurisdiction, Benavente jumped at the chance to leverage their business needs with the CNMI's workforce strategy.

"DOL WIA's director David Attao has been a key advocate in establishing our apprenticeship strategy and work experience programs. Given the course of the discussion with the firm, he recognized that their training and on-boarding plan was directly in-line with the mission of DOL WIA and the U.S.DOL Apprenticeship State Expansion program. We will continue to work with our partners at the Latte Training

Academy to bring this tremendous opportunity to fruition. This effort is exactly the push that this administration has worked so diligently to produce. While we are still in beginning phases, to be able to generate the interest within this industry is extraordinary," said Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente.

To learn more about the opportunity, interested parties are encouraged to contact the CNMI's Department of Labor's WIOA office at (670) 664-1708. To learn more about the Latte Training Academy's CompTIA program, visit [www.lattetrainingacademy.org](http://www.lattetrainingacademy.org). (PR)

### AT NMC'S CASH FOR COLLEGE

## Free notary, copying services



The Northern Marianas College will offer free notary public services to attendees of this week's "Cash for College" workshops on Rota and Saipan. For more information, visit [www.marianas.edu](http://www.marianas.edu). NMC

In addition to receiving help in finding money for college, participants of Northern Marianas College's upcoming "Cash for College" workshops can also have their financial aid documents notarized and photocopied without charge.

The workshops on Rota and Saipan will be held on the following dates:

■ Friday, Nov. 22, 2019 (9am-12pm): NMC Rota: Building A-1

■ Saturday, Nov. 23, 2019 (9am-12pm): NMC As Terlaje campus: Between Buildings N and O

At the workshop participants will be provided with personal, step-by-step assistance in completing college financial aid forms, focusing especially on forms like the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and application forms for the CNMI Scholarship, Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance, and other municipal scholarship programs.

Staff members from the college's Office of Admissions and Records will also be present to provide information and assistance with the NMC admission application process. Additionally, those who

participate in the workshop will qualify to have their NMC application fee and placement test fees waived for the upcoming spring 2020 semester. This waiver represents a savings of up to \$75.

Parents or guardians interested in attending the Cash for College workshop can also bring their children to the Children's Center in NMC's Building J in room J16. This free service provided by NMC's School of Education will be ongoing throughout the event. Parents that utilize the Children's Center must sign a liability form.

Although not required, it is recommended that workshop participants bring a valid form of identification (e.g., a valid U.S. passport, copy of valid application for a U.S. passport, birth certificate, or green card), an official transcript from high school (at least three official copies), Copy of 2017 and 2018 1040, Copy of 2017 and 2018 W-2 (if not filing), and proof of CNMI residency, including proof of continuing residency.

For additional information, contact the NMC Financial Aid Office at 237-6792 or email [fao@marianas.edu](mailto:fao@marianas.edu). (PR)

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# Ogumoro re-elected as CHCC board chair

By MARC A. VENUS  
marc\_venus@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Care Corp.'s board of trustees

has re-elected Lauri Ogumoro to her current post as board chairwoman, while also electing newly-inducted board member Edward "Tofila" De-

leon Guerrero as the board's vice chairman.

Both were nominated by board member Polly Masga, and the board unanimously

approved both nominations yesterday at CHCC's Public Health and Emergency Preparedness Program conference room.

Ogumoro and Deleon Guerrero will both serve two-year terms.

Ogumoro, who has been with the CHCC board since 2017, said that CHCC's current goal is to resolve its ongoing financial issues, while catering to the needs of the community, public health, and the health of the organization as a whole.

"There's a lot of different moving parts [at CHCC] and we can't lose sight of what and why we are doing it... as it is all for the patients and the CNMI community," Ogumoro said.

Ogumoro, who is also executive director of Karidat Social Services, said they

will continue to work with CHCC CEO Esther Muña and her staff to strive to provide quality health care for the CNMI. "We have a lot of needs and, with the CHCC outgrowing the Commonwealth Health Center, we need to come up with ideas to expand and benefit the CHCC," she said.

The other members of the board are Masga and Corrine Hofschneider Santos from Tinian. Masga, Ogumoro, and Deleon Guerrero are the elected members of Saipan, while Santos is the lone representative of Tinian. Ogumoro urged the governor to appoint a member from Rota. Under the law, the board must have three members from Saipan and one each from Tinian and Rota.



CNMI Women's Association program administrator Felicidad Ogumoro, center, receives a \$1,500 donation from McDonald's Saipan, in support of CWA's first annual "Fun-Raise-Her" Dinner on Friday, Nov. 22, from 6pm to 10pm, at the Hibiscus Hall of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan in Garapan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## Businesses support women

By IVA MAURIN  
iva\_maurin@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The CNMI Women's Association welcomes business partners as corporate sponsors of the first Women's "Fun-Raise-Her" Dinner on Friday, Nov. 22, from 6pm to 10pm, at the Hibiscus Hall of Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan in Garapan.

"We stress our strong commitment to continue supporting and advocating for the education, employment, and economic equity for all wom-

en for a better and stronger Commonwealth," CWA program administrator Felicidad Ogumoro said. "With corporate sponsorships, we can continue to realize this."

McDonald's Saipan recently donated \$1,500 to CWA support of its inaugural "Fun-Raise-Her" Dinner. The event, which CWA wants to become a yearly fundraiser, is intended to be CWA's signature event to celebrate, support, and help raise much-needed funds for women.

Other corporate sponsors

that have signed up are Tan Siu Lin Foundation and Tan Holdings, Bank of Guam, IT&E, *Marianas Variety*, and Fiesta Resort & Spa. Each gave CWA either \$1,500 cash or in-kind donations.

CWA invites the community to support the fundraiser, to help further advance girls and women in the CNMI.

With tickets priced at \$75 per person, proceeds from the first "Fun-Raise-Her" would support CWA's operations and programs, services, and activities on women's education, career training, and leadership

development.

Year after year, CWA continues to expand traditional networks of assistance through its collaboration with employment and education providers while continuing community-based efforts to increase access and opportunity for our women and their families.

For more information on CWA programs and to purchase "Fun-Raise-Her" tickets, contact 233-8978/9411, email cwa.fogumoro@gmail.com, or visit the CWA Office (Building #1223) on Capital Hill.

## Skymark plane contest launched

To celebrate the launch of regular, direct flight service by Skymark Airlines Inc. from Tokyo to the Marianas beginning Nov. 29, the Marianas Visitors Authority has launched a contest inviting residents of the Marianas to create Skymark plane sculptures.

First place will be awarded \$500, second place will receive \$300, and third place will receive \$200. Winners will also receive MVA giveaways.

Sculptures must be made from recycled material and be no larger than 4'x 4'. Registration forms and full contest details are available at the MVA office on Beach Road in San Jose or by emailing info@mymarianas.com or calling 1 (670) 664-3200/1. Sculptures and entries forms must be sub-

mitted to the MVA office by Dec. 12, 2019, at 4pm. Entries will be judged with a point system based on originality, detail, creativity, and neatness.

"To make the start of Skymark's service to the Marianas and what we expect will be a revival of the Japan market, we invite the public to express their creativity and submit an entry of a Skymark plane sculpture," said MVA marketing manager Thomas Kim. "It's free to enter the contest and there are more exciting events planned for Skymark night in December, so get started on your plane sculptures and stay tuned!"

The winning sculpture will be announced on Skymark night on Dec. 21, 2019, during the Christmas in the Marianas celebration at Paseo de Marianas in Garapan. (PR)

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
**CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID**  
**ITB NO.: DPW20-ITB-004**

**SUBMISSION DATE: December 10, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

**"ALU DRIVE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

**THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.**

A non-refundable payment of **One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **November 25, 2019**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **December 3, 2019** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ JAMES A. ADA  
SECRETARY, DPW

/s/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON  
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
**CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID**  
**ITB NO.: DPW20-ITB-005**

**SUBMISSION DATE: December 23, 2019 TIME: 10:00 A.M.**

**"Construction of Sidewalk from Mobil Gas Station to Tanapag Bridge"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

**THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.**

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There will be a **Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **December 10, 2019**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **December 16, 2019** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ PETER P. CAMACHO  
ACTING SECRETARY, DPW

/s/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON  
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**  
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**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**(11/18/19)**

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) would like to inform the General Public that our NMHC Central Office in Garapan will be "CLOSED" on November 27, 2019, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to conduct professional development training. The NMHC Field Office in Rota will be closed from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on November 27, 2019. The NMHC Field Office in Tinian Field Office will remain open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Our NMHC Central Office in Garapan will be open to accept transactions from 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on November 27, 2019.

If you may have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our office at (670)234-6866/9447.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios  
Corporate Director

**"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"**



## Kilili wants to help more obtain free Medicare services

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP)'s latest outreach effort aims to help more people in the Marianas use the free Medicare preventive care services they are entitled to. The congressional office held its first Medicare informational session on Tuesday and plans to get out into the community for more sessions in the coming months.

"Of the 2,000 people in the Marianas enrolled in Medicare, only about 100 are taking advantage of their free, annual wellness visit," Sablan said. "Many probably are unaware that they qualify for this free service."

"If Medicare beneficiaries do not want the annual wellness visit—or the other free

preventive care that Medicare gives them—that is their choice, of course. I just want to be sure everyone knows these services are available, because getting preventive care can mean longer, healthier lives," he added.

In addition to the free annual wellness visit, people insured by Medicare can get screenings for heart disease; prostate, lung, cervical, vaginal, and colon cancers; and diabetes. Guidance on quitting smoking is available at no cost. Flu and pneumonia shots are also provided to Medicare beneficiaries for free. Less than half of those enrolled in Medicare in the Marianas are using these services.

"Medicare insurance is

something we contribute to throughout our working lives and then after age 65 continue to pay a premium directly or through a Social Security deduction," Sablan said. "I want to make sure that my constituents know what they are en-

titled to and are getting what they pay for."

Tuesday's information session was held at the Saipan congressional office and lasted about one hour. A small group of current and incoming Medicare benefi-

ciaries registered to attend. Outreach coordinator Katrina Punzalan said she will make note of attendees' feedback from this first session to ensure that the congressional office has answers to common questions that could come up. Plans to improve and expand future sessions to

accommodate larger groups are in the works.

"The feedback we received from participants [on Tuesday] was very helpful," Sablan said. "I want to thank everyone who helped us focus our message, so we can help more people stay healthy." (PR)

## Fingers crossed for January return to KagES

By **MARC A. VENUS**  
marc\_venus@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

While repair work for Kagman Elementary School is still on hold, school principal Dr. Ignacia Demapan is hoping that classes will return to full sessions at the main campus this January.

Issues with KagES' electrical system has forced the school to

relocate to Chacha Oceanview Middle School, where it is currently holding half-day sessions.

Demapan said the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and the Public School System have already completed their inspections, and the private contractor that CUC had recommended, Kimco Enterprises Inc., will be repairing the school's electrical system.

She said Kimco was given the go-signal about three weeks ago and is just waiting for the materials to arrive in order to begin the repair work.

Demapan said Kimco informed her that it will take about eight weeks for the materials to arrive in the CNMI. She said the last update she got from the contractor was that they were completing the permit and paperwork needed prior to the materials arriving

in order to begin the repairs.

Demapan said she talked with previous Education commissioner Glenn Muña about the project. "It's just a matter of the materials getting here in time so that they can do the work," Demapan said.

An overloaded junction box at the school that was emitting smoke prompted KagES to relocate. The issue just came days before the school's opening last Sept. 3.

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# Number of Chinese visitors to Hawaii continues to decline

**HONOLULU (AP)**—The number of Chinese visitors to Hawaii is decreasing in a trend that has continued for the past four years.

Hawaii Public Radio reported Tuesday that Chinese visitors to Hawaii are down 26% through the third quarter of 2019 that closed at the end of September.

The Hawaii Tourism Authority says Chinese tourist arrivals in the state have declined since 2015.

China’s Ministry for Culture and Tourism says about 150 million Chinese citizens traveled abroad in 2018.

Officials say that number has more than tripled over a 10-year period, with Chinese travelers generating \$250 billion in annual economic activity worldwide.

Anu Anwar of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies says the decline could be a form of political punishment by the Chinese government against its rivals.

## Hotel construction questioned

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The operator of the Saipan Ocean View Hotel and a land-owner are questioning why the Department of Public Works is not stopping the ongoing construction of a five-story hotel at the site of the former Sunleader Mart grocery store on Beach Road in Garapan, despite a promise to do so, since there has been no soil testing of the site.

In her declaration, Charity R. Hodson, counsel for Trinidad Benavente, said the stop-work-order never materialized and that she called and left a message and emailed an assistant attorney general at the Office of the Attorney General’s Civil Division, to which she has not, to this date, received any response.

Hodson’s declaration was attached in support of Benavente’s and co-plaintiffs Modern Investment Inc.’s motion for preliminary injunction filed in the Superior Court

against Sunleader (Saipan) Co. Ltd., Hui Tao Tsang, Dragon Pacific Corp., Sunyes Saipan Corp., and Yantze Corp.

Modern Investment runs the adjacent Saipan Ocean View Hotel, a 102-room, three-story building.

Benavente is one of the owners of a piece of lot in Garapan. The 10 unnamed co-plaintiffs of Modern Investment and Benavente are the remaining owners of the lot who may have an interest in the land.

Tsang is the sole director and shareholder of Sunleader Corp. and Dragon Pacific Corp. Tsang is also the sole director and officer of Sunyes Corp.

Tsang, who also goes by the name Franco or Franco Hui Tao Tsang, is a resident of the CNMI.

Yantze Corp. is a contractor engaged in the business activities of general construction.

In her declaration, Hodson said that representatives of Modern Investment Inc. and Benavente, their lawyers,



Construction of a five-story hotel project adjacent to the three-story Saipan Ocean View Hotel along Beach Road, Garapan was ongoing when *Saipan Tribune* took this photo Tuesday afternoon.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

and a structural engineer had gone to DPW on Aug. 31, 2019, and raised some concerns with DPW’s Building Safety official Casiano Bostre, Dennis Drew, building inspector Angelo Camacho, as well as CNMI Zoning’s Eubert Alepuyo. Those concerns, Hodson said, included the project’s inconsistent plans and damage caused to the plaintiffs’ neighboring buildings.

She said the structural engineer recommended that a geotechnical study needed to be completed to determine what needed to be done to stabilize the five-story hotel.

Hodson said that Bostre agreed that the damage presented by the plaintiffs was a public concern, that Bostre agreed that a stop-work order should be issued and kept in place until soil testing was completed by the hotel, and that he promised both to issue a stop-work order and to require soil testing.

At the time of that meeting, Hodson said, DPW had already issued a stop-work order against the project a couple of weeks before for failing to obtain a building permit, in violation of the Building Safety Code.

Hodson said Benavente believes the reason for the initial stop-work order was because debris was falling from the hotel’s construction site and causing a public safety issue for people walking in and out of the neighboring buildings and cars parked nearby.

The lawyer said that on Sept. 1 and 2, 2019, DPW investigators did a walk-through of the hotel’s construction site and DPW lifted the work order. She said construction began again, mere days after DPW had promised plaintiffs that no construction would continue without soil testing.

Hodson said she followed up with DPW’s Building Safety official with a call to inquire why a stop-work order had not been issued as promised. She said Bostre indicated that it was “a sensitive issue” and directed her to speak with DPW’s legal counsel at the Civil Division of the Office of the Attorney General.

Hodson said that she met with an assistant attorney general at the OAG’s Civil Division on the morning of Aug. 8, 2019, and was told that DPW’s walk-through confirmed that netting had been put in place to prevent falling debris.

Hodson said the assistant attorney general also stated

that it was expected that DPW would issue another stop-work order that same day due to the lack of a soil testing, which DPW had required some time ago but never enforced.

The southern edge of the Sunleader Building and the northern edge of the Fun & Game Building touched each other or shared a common wall.

According to the lawsuit, defendants embarked on a plan to transform the Sunleader Building into a five-story building by adding atop its first story four new stories to transform it into a new hotel. This new hotel is planned to be called the Royal View Hotel.

The lawsuit alleged that the actual bearing capacity of the soil beneath the Sunleader Building is insufficient to bear the weight of the hotel.

In February 2018, construction began on the hotel. This construction included stories of the hotel that were built up to and touched the southernmost wall of Ocean View’s three-story building.

Beginning in July of 2018, Saipan Ocean View Hotel personnel discovered unexplained damage to the southern portion of Ocean View’s three-story building, including popped tiles, tilts in flooring, and cracks.

Meanwhile, Fun & Game personnel also discovered cracks in the northern portion of the Fun & Game Building, which started to appear after construction began at the hotel.

Fun & Game personnel have complained to Benavente about the cracks in the Fun & Game Building caused by the construction of the new five-story hotel. In turn, Benavente has complained about the cracks in the Fun & Game Building to the owners of the hotel project, DPW, and Hui Tao Tsang and Sunleader Corp.

**DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**  
P. O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950, Gualo Rai Center, Saipan  
TEL. NO. 664-8300 • FAX NO. 664-8315  
www.dcrm.gov.mp

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION**  
**As of November 21, 2019**

**THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:**

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Department of Public Lands	10/28/2019 TMS-2020-X-006	Marpo Heights Phase II Homestead Subdivision	Central Plateau Area, Tinian	Major-Siting	Under Review*
2. Micronesia Resort Inc. dba Kensington Hotel	11/01/2019 SLR-2018-X-185-R2 Amendment 2020-1	Sail Boat	San Roque, Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Approved 11/18/2019
3. CAP, LLC	11/07/2019 SMS-2020-X-008	Transfer of Interest & Name Change	Chalan Laulau, Saipan	Major-Siting	Approved* 11/15/2019
4. Saipan Crewboats, Inc.	11/13/2019 SPI-2020-X-009	Drydock	Lower Base, Saipan	Ports & Industrial	Approved* 11/19/2019
5. Mariana Acquisition Corporation dba IP&E Saipan	11/14/2019 SPI-2020-X-010	Guard House & Laboratory Building	Puerto Rico, Saipan	Ports & Industrial	Under Review*
6. Black Bison Travel Corporation dba 1st Diving Club	11/19/2019 SLR-2018-X-117-R2 Amendment 2020-1	Sail Boat	Mañagaha	Lagoon & Reef	Under Review*
7. Commonwealth Utilities Corporation	11/20/2019 SW-2020-X-011	Koa Lane 6" Waterline Project	Mt. Tapochao, Saipan	Wetland	Under Review*
8. Geming Xu dba Li Xu, LLC	09/05/2019 SMS-2019-X-060	Latte Stone Hotel	Garapan, Saipan	Major-Siting	Approved* 11/13/2019
9. GPPC, Inc.	08/06/2019 TMS-2019-X-048	Rock Quarry	Tachognya, Tinian	Major-Siting	Approved* 11/13/2019
10. First Asia Pacific Hotel Management, Inc.	06/26/2019 SMS-2019-X-045	Asia Pacific Hotel	Garapan, Saipan	Major-Siting	Approved* 11/13/2019

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (\*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

## Isla Montessori School offers scholarships

The Isla Montessori School in Dandan is offering scholarships that can help families achieve high quality, affordable education for their children.

Susan Book and Diana Silveira, who co-head the school, said, “Making a quality education available to the Saipan community has always been a goal. With our scholarship fund, we have the opportunity to offer some financial assistance to families who may not otherwise be able to afford a high-quality private education for their children.”

At Isla Montessori School, children undergo an authentic Montessori education, while also learning Chamorro and Carolinian languages, traditions, and arts.

To learn more about Isla Montessori School, receive a scholarship packet, and schedule a tour, call 288.4752 or email [info@islamontessori.org](mailto:info@islamontessori.org). Visit their web site at [www.islamontessori.org](http://www.islamontessori.org). (PR)



# SIS students help MINA with tree restoration campaign



IVA MAURIN

Saipan International School students trooped to Micro Beach in Garapan yesterday to plant native trees on the shorelines of Saipan, as part of the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance's "Bring Back Our Trees" campaign.

By IVA MAURIN  
iva\_maurin@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Saipan International School students are stepping up to help abate the effects of climate change one tree at a time.

Over 40 SIS students trooped to Micro Beach in Garapan yesterday to plant native trees on the shorelines of Saipan, as part of the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance's "Bring Back Our Trees" campaign.

"For our generation, we are left with a world that is bro-

ken with climate change," said SIS student Annamarie Devey, who helped plant about 30 native trees with other SIS students. "Climate change is important. Don't deny it and try to get involved as much as you can. It is really up to us to save Earth."

MINA's original goal was to plant 300 native trees to replace the ones uprooted by super typhoons Soudelor in 2015 and Yutu in 2018. However, with the many community organizations and school groups, like

SIS, that volunteered to help restore the trees, MINA had already planted double that target, with over 600 trees now planted around the island.

Aside from planting trees, the students also met scientists from Guam who are on the island for the Terrestrial Conservation Conference and Workshop.

"It is good to get the students out of the classroom," said SIS science teacher April Liske-Clark. "They are learning about evolution and DNA [deoxyribonucleic acid] right

now, so tree planting and introducing species, and seeing how that can relate to species diversity in the plants, could at least educate them a little bit."

Liske-Clark also said that having experienced the trau-

matic effects of Super Typhoon Yutu, they wanted to make sure that they give back and help the island recover.

Before the tree planting, MINA program manager Jolly Ann Cruz and MINA's Tasi

Watch ranger Daniel "Sowm" Kaipat talked about the role of trees in providing food and oxygen, as well as in controlling soil erosion and protecting coral from damage, among other benefits of trees.

## PH consulate to visit Saipan in Dec.

The Philippine Consulate General in Guam, in coordination with the office of Philippine Honorary Consul to the CNMI Glicerio "Eli" Arago, will be conducting a consular outreach mission on Saipan on Dec. 3-5, from 8am to 4pm, at the Sun Palace Hotel in Susupe.

Applications for ePassports will be processed during the three-day consular mission.

All ePassport applicants should check the list of schedules available on the Philip-

pine Consulate General's Facebook page (facebook.com/PHinAgana/). Biometrics and personal data capturing for ePassport applications will be according to the attended schedule. Those who are on the list of ePassport applicants must show up at the venue on the date and time indicated in the schedule in proper attire (i.e. with collar and sleeves). Personal appearance is required for all ePassport applicants.

For consular services, including passport renewal, that require civil registration documents such as birth certificate and marriage certificate, documents from the Philippine Statistics Authority or from the former National Statistics Office will be accepted.

For confirmation and clarification, call (670) 233-6293 and ask for Mel Santos, or email [eppt.pcgagana@gmail.com](mailto:eppt.pcgagana@gmail.com). (Iva Maurin)

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Notice to all CNMI veterans

The Guam Vet Center will be conducting a Registration Drive and Outreach tomorrow, Nov. 22, 2019, from 12pm to 2pm at Tronkun Daok in Susupe and on Nov. 23, 2019 (TBA). If you may have any questions, contact (671) 472-7161. (PR)

### Traffic cases to be heard at Multi-Purpose

This is to inform the public that the CNMI Superior Court will be hearing all traffic arraignments set for today, Nov. 21, 2019, at 9am at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Building in Susupe. For additional information or assistance, contact the Office of the Clerk of Court at (670) 235-4258 or 234-4253 or email [Patrick.V.Diaz@justice.gov.mp](mailto:Patrick.V.Diaz@justice.gov.mp). (PR)

### SHRM meeting today

The Society for Human Re-

source Management-CNMI Chapter will have its general membership meeting today, Nov. 21, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan ballroom, beginning at 8am. The guest speaker will be Jenna Gram-bort, trial attorney in the Immigrant and Employee Rights Section of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, who will be presenting information on the INA's anti-discrimination provision. She will provide helpful information on how to avoid employment discrimination based on citizenship status and national origin.

The results of the election for the 2020 CNMI SHRM board members will also be announced.

This meeting is open to the public and includes a breakfast buffet at the cost of \$20 for SHRM members and \$30 for non-members. Reserve your seat by contacting Penny

Jones by e-mail at [penelope.jones@hyatt.com](mailto:penelope.jones@hyatt.com) or Denise Montenegro at [denise.montenegro@hyatt.com](mailto:denise.montenegro@hyatt.com) or by telephone at 323-5867/68. (PR)

### Survivors & caregivers support group meeting today

All people facing cancer, their family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association's monthly support group meeting today, Nov. 21, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. Guest speaker is Dr. Peter Brett, oncologist at the Commonwealth Health Center. His presentation will be on the roles of diet, physical activity and body weight among cancer survivors.

To RSVP or for more information, call the Commonwealth Cancer Association at 682-0050 or email at [ccamarianas@gmail.com](mailto:ccamarianas@gmail.com). (PR)



## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM DR-4235, 4396, 4404-MP PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAM OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 | Telephone: (670) 664-2374 | Facsimile: (670) 664-2408

## INVITATION FOR BIDS ITB20-GOV-015

### FEMA DR-4235-MP 404 HMGP Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water System Mitigation Project

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Arnold L. Palacios, through the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), (collectively, "Commonwealth") and on behalf of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) are soliciting sealed bids for the supply, construction and implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project located at various sites on the island of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available and may be obtained at Pacific Quick Print & Post, in Garapan, Saipan beginning **November 22, 2019 for \$100.00** (non-refundable), payable to Pacific Quick Print & Post. **All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.**

**Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001 and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70-30.3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees.** All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Thursday, December 5, 2019, 10:00 am ChST** at the Governor's Conference in Capitol Hill, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Ms. Leona Deleon Guerrero in writing by e-mail to [ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp](mailto:ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp) or fax to (670) 664-2408 on or before **Wednesday, December 13, 2019**. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-015 Supply, Construction and Implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST December 30, 2019**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST December 30, 2019** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to [a.magofna@dof.gov.mp](mailto:a.magofna@dof.gov.mp). For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than December 30, 2019 and the bid documents must be received no later than **January 9, 2020**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at 10:30 a.m. ChST, January 13, 2020. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at 10:30 a.m. ChST, December 30, 2019.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract. Acceptable assets are only:

- Cash
- US Government Securities
- Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is 240 Calendar Days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be \$1,000/day.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

### BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

(To be part of Solicitation for quotes, ITBs and RFPs)

- Gratuities.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefor. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).
- Kickbacks.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b).
- Contingent Fees.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Virginia C. Villagomez  
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon, Acting Director  
CNMI Procurement & Supply



# Opinion

## *Hafa Adai!* Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 229

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,  
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI  
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950**Jayvee L. Vallejera** EDITOR  
jayvee\_vallejera@saipantribune.com**Mark Rabago** ASSOCIATE EDITOR  
mark\_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

## EDITORIAL

### Trump says he might testify in the impeachment probe. What a great idea

It may well be that President Trump wasn't serious Monday when he tweeted, "I like the idea" in response to Speaker Nancy Pelosi's suggestion that he testify in the House impeachment inquiry, which he described as the "phony Impeachment Witch Hunt." Even if he meant what he said, the idea is likely to be opposed by his lawyers.

But we can't help but hope that it will happen, and that House Democrats will help make it possible. It could take place either in the current phase of the impeachment inquiry presided over by Rep. Adam Schiff, chairman of the Intelligence Committee, or in subsequent proceedings before the House Judiciary Committee.

So far investigators have heard testimony that builds a powerful, if not yet conclusive, case that there was a corrupt connection between a delay of military aid for Ukraine and Trump's desire for investigations by Ukraine that would benefit him politically, including a probe of former Vice President Joe Biden.

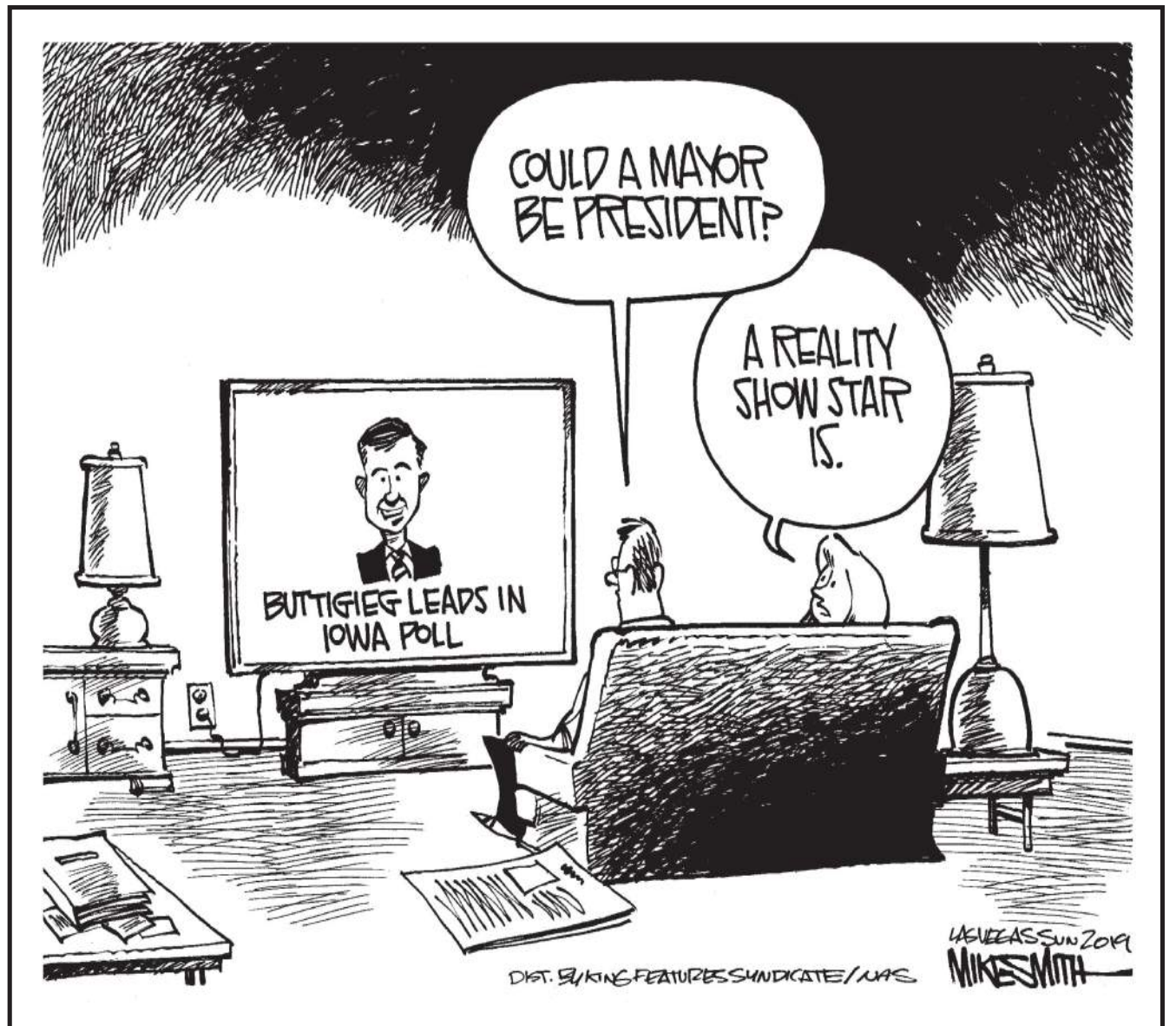
On Wednesday, the committee is scheduled to again hear, this time in open session, from Gordon Sondland, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union. Sondland probably will be asked about testimony by a U.S. diplomat who says he overheard a July 26 telephone call in which Trump asked Sondland if Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was "gonna do the investigation"—an apparent reference to the investigation of Biden that Trump had suggested the day before in his now famous telephone call with Zelenskyy.

If Trump wants to contest testimony by Sondland or any other witness about his words or actions, he should be willing to answer questions under oath from the House investigators. While he's at it, he should drop the White House's opposition to testimony of important witnesses such as acting Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney and former national security adviser John Bolton. The president's unwillingness to allow testimony from the senior aides who repeatedly discussed Ukraine with him obstructs the impeachment investigation and makes the whole country wonder what exactly he's got to hide.

In recommending that Trump answer questions about his actions, we acknowledge that his testimony might be neither decisive nor particularly credible. It's also notable that in written answers to special counsel Robert S. Mueller III, he repeatedly said he had no recollection of potentially important events or conversations.

Still, in an inquiry that is necessarily focused on his words and actions, Trump owes the House his account. If he fails to tell his side of the story, he and his defenders can't credibly argue that the process is unfair.

(c) 2019 Los Angeles Times



## Don't suppress votes of new citizens

Voter suppression is an old story that comes in many incarnations. Usually, the culprits are states, which restrict ballot access or gerrymander districts.

But a new kind of voter suppression is being perpetrated by the federal government and flying largely under the radar: a multifaceted effort to prevent legal immigrants from becoming citizens in time to vote.

This is not about immigration, which concerns who is permitted to enter the country. Rather, it's about naturalization, the process through which legal permanent residents become citizens.

Most people, regardless of political persuasion, express support for those who have entered the country legally with the goal of becoming citizens. "I don't think any American can fail to be moved by a moment like this," remarked Vice President Mike Pence earlier this fall at a White House naturalization ceremony. He lauded the new citizens' "determination to join the American family."

Yet the Trump administration has quietly made it harder for eligible immigrants to become citizens.

On Nov. 14, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services proposed hiking the application fee for most people from \$640 to \$1,170 and eliminating a reduced-cost option for lower wage earners; they've also made it harder for very low-income applicants to obtain fee waivers.

Meanwhile, the administration has been processing applications at a snail's pace, creating a tremendous backlog. The wait has doubled in recent years, with the nationwide amount of pending naturalization applications totaling nearly 700,000 as of June—more than the populations of Wyoming or Vermont. The government's efficiency in handling the backlog is at its lowest level in a decade, and in some places, the estimated wait exceeds two years.

The government has pledged faster processing, but its refusal even to provide data about the problem belies this promise. Last fall, a coalition of organizations sued to get backlog-related documents; court filings show little disclosure by the government since then.

In the shooting-ourselves-in-the-foot category, the administration has created naturalization barriers even for immigrants serving our country. In 2017, the Department of Defense made it harder for service members to gain citizenship through a program offering a citizenship fast track to immigrant recruits with

By **TERRI GERSTEIN**

Tribune News Service

Terri Gerstein is the director of the state and local enforcement project at the Harvard Labor and Worklife Program. This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is run by The Progressive magazine and distributed by Tribune News Service.



needed skills. Last year, the military discharged dozens of recruits enlisted under the program.

The administration even opened an office focused on stripping naturalized citizens of their citizenship.

Blocking or delaying people from becoming citizens affects their lives in countless ways, including depriving them of the ability to vote.

Could the chokehold on naturalization be decisive next year? In 2016, around 8% of voters were naturalized citizens. President Trump won Florida by 112,911 votes and Michigan by 10,704. As of June, there were 64,257 citizenship applications pending in Florida and 8,294 in Michigan. In a close 2020 election, extreme naturalization delays could impact the outcome.

While 82 House Democrats signed a letter to the Government Accountability Office and the House held a hearing on the overall immigration backlog, there has been little focus specifically on the voter suppression impact, aside from a report by the National Partnership for New Americans.

The current administration is surely aware of its unpopularity among newly naturalized voters; a Univision News poll showed 78% disapproval of Trump's performance among Hispanics. Delaying citizenship to potential new voters is an effective way to depress turnout.

State and local leaders should shine a light on backlogs affecting their constituents. Congress should scrutinize naturalization delays and their potential impact on voter rolls. The public should seek answers to all of this, as well as submit comments opposing the application cost hike. All of us should demand that our aspiring brothers and sisters be given the chance, without delay, to join the American family.



**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## Decrying income inequality is a harmful tactic that will make us all worse off

The 2020 presidential field is saturated with candidates decrying wealth inequality and making the argument to soak the rich. One front-runner, for instance, is constantly denouncing “the millionaires and the billionaires.” Ominously, a New York Times poll found that two-thirds of Americans believe that “wealth in this country should be more evenly distributed among more people.”

Now, it is true that, in America, the top 1% owns 42% of the wealth, and the top 0.1% owns as much as the bottom 90 percent, so it's easy to see how many Americans don't think capitalism is working for them. Relative to those “millionaires and billionaires,” plenty of people think they are getting crumbs, while others are taking big slices of the pie.

But is “income equality” the best measure of progress or prosperity?

Consider choosing between the following two actual countries. Country A has much more inequality than Country B. On the Gini measure of inequality – where 0 indicates perfect equality and 100 perfect inequality – Country A has a Gini index of 45 (the 103rd least-equal country) and Country B has a Gini index of 26 (among the top-ten most equal countries).

In Country A, the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$62,000, while in Country B, the GDP per capita is \$5,700. In Country A, income in the highest quintile averages \$143,000 and in the lowest quintile \$15,500. In Country B, income in the highest quintile averages \$10,300 and in the lowest quintile \$2,900.

Country A describes the United States, and Country B describes the far more equal former Soviet state of Belarus. While everyone in Belarus is relatively much more equal, they are certainly not better off. In fact, relative to the rest of the world, the citizens of Belarus are for the most part, much poorer.

Rejecting income or wealth egalitarianism does not imply rejecting equal rights, equal treatment, or equal access to opportunity, and it does not imply that some people are judged as morally inferior. Society cannot mandate that everyone have equal height, weight, eye color, hair color, or religion, but society should not mandate that everyone make the same economic choices or be in the same economic situation, either. Even if society were to comprise otherwise-identical people who simply have different goals, we should not expect all people to have the same amount of income or wealth at all times.

One of the biggest problems with egalitarianism is it negatively judges people getting richer at different rates, even if everyone in society is getting richer in the process. Furthermore, it negatively judges the fact that every person starts with less and becomes richer throughout his lifetime.

Most measures of inequality, such as the Gini coefficient, are snapshots of what people in society have in any given year and do not track what individuals have over their lives. And most of the talk about the top 1% implies that the people in the top 1% remain there. This may have been true in feudalism, where one's

By **EDWARD STRINGHAM**

Tribune News Service

*Edward Peter Stringham is a Research Fellow at the Independent Institute and a contributor to its new book “In All Fairness.” He is also president of the American Institute for Economic Research, Davis Professor of Economic Organizations and Innovation at Trinity College, and editor of the Journal of Private Enterprise.*



title determined income, but in a market economy most people's income and wealth change, typically moving upward, over their lifetimes.

By focusing on relative rather than absolute levels of income or wealth, egalitarianism mandates policies that can make everyone poorer as a result. Rather than looking down on increases in income and wealth in differing amounts, we should celebrate and be grateful for the efforts of those who work for the benefit of all. After all, we collectively are choosing, freely, where to spend our hard-earned money. The only entity forcing open our pocketbooks is ironically the same one politicians want to use to increase so-called equality—the government.

## The sleeper spy they forgot to wake up

I think I might be a sleeper spy someone forgot to wake up.

By Fox News standards, I'm basically a Dreamer: My parents came from Canada and my grandparents (all four) emigrated from Ukraine when it was still part of Russia (at least one under hay in a wagon, fleeing conscription from the Czar's army). Therefore, I am suspect in the eyes of 63 million people.

I know spies keep secrets, but is it possible that they even keep secrets from themselves? How would I know if I'm a Soviet spy, leftover from the Cold War and just waiting for the perfect moment to wreak havoc on my adopted country?

When I look back, my roots as a dissident are obvious. My earliest memory of protesting the world order involves marching with my parents in 1963 as part of an historic march to desegregate Gwynn Oak Amusement Park. I was 11.

In 1968 at age 16, I earned my first suspension when I and a group of other Pikesville High School students defiantly lowered the flag to half-mast in honor of the four students murdered at Kent State. When I was finally allowed to return to school three days later, I wore my punishment as a red badge of courage (one of the books we had to read that year) among my fellow classmates.

That's the same year I formally enter politics by campaigning for Sen. Eugene McCarthy in his ill-fated bid for president. My mother must have been in on the plot, because I'm pretty sure she went door-to-door with me.

Somehow I survived these early intrigues and made it to college. After a couple of tame anti-war rallies in college, I finally went big in 1972, when I got tear-gassed and arrested during a Vietnam War protest. Somehow I was mistaken for a hippie protestor and thrown in the clink with hundreds of other long-haired operatives, consigned to three days of bologna sandwiches—on white bread! Have they no pride? (To be fair, we all know that “Pride” wouldn't come for at least another decade.) Little did my jailors know that they were dealing not just with someone who carries a copy of the living-off-the-land bible “Stalking The Wild Asparagus” in her backpack, but a trained agent in l'arte du espionage! (Well, to be honest, neither did I.)

Luckily for me, that was all just a little misunderstanding that was quickly cleared up by the ACLU when they brought a class action lawsuit against the U.S. Justice Department and Attorney General John Mitchell for arresting us illegally as we were being addressed by our elected representatives on the Capitol steps—a right by the way, that is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. I received a tidy check about 10 years later that I used for the down payment on my first house. Ah, capitalism in all its glory.

My career as a secret agent stalled for a bit when I took time off for motherhood—nursing a baby and the dark arts don't mix well—but by the time that baby was in high school, she was marching on the front lines with me to protest the Iraq War. In-

By **RUTH GOLDSTEIN**

The Baltimore Sun

*Ruth Goldstein (RuthGoldstein@comcast.net) is an essayist writing from Pikesville, Md.*



doctrinate them early, I say.

I went to ground for a number of years, thinking my protesting days were over. But in 2016, my country called upon me, once again, to bare my arms in resistance (a la our immediate past first lady). This time, I helped organize buses to bring hundreds of comrades to the front lines of the struggle. Our pink pussy hats stretched all the way to the horizon.

Today, I live the quiet life of an armchair radical (my stenosis has been acting up). I spend my mornings writing postcards for the resistance, and my afternoons Zentangling hypnotic art (who knows what's hiding in the patterns). I don't know if The Man will ever catch up to me—or if I will ever catch on to myself. Regardless, I'm ready, with a Sharpie in one hand and a bottle of oat milk in the other.

## The 2017 Las Vegas massacre may have claimed another victim

The dead, of course, get the headlines. Four killed in Fresno, five in San Diego, two in Santa Clarita, all within the past week. Each loss is a tragedy that we try to salve with memorials, grief counselors, criminal trials of the perpetrators, all by now part of our rituals in processing what has become the inevitable: acts of gun violence.

And none of those steps quite do the trick because grief is not something you heal, it is something you endure.

Acts of gun violence linger differently for the wounded, whose grief over the loss of friends is compounded by their own physical and psychological trauma.

On Friday, Kimberly Gervais died at Redlands Community Hospital two years after she was shot during the massacre at the Route 91 Harvest music festival in Las Vegas. Autopsy results are pending, but the presumption is that the wounds she suffered—a bullet shattered her spine, leaving her a quadriplegic—led to her death. If so, that would bring the toll of that horrific event to 59 killed.

The interval between her wounding and her death were marked, according to a sister, by extreme pain.

“She hurt. Even though she was paralyzed ... she could feel all the pain,” the sister, Dena Sarvela, told an Oregon television station. “It took almost a year before she was able to transport out to go back home to California, that was rough .... She lost her

zest for life because of it, because of the shooting, because of her injuries that she sustained. It was hard to be that same person that we all know and love.”

The psychological effects linger as well, and sometimes debilitate.

Sean Brooks was 9 years old when a gunman stormed his family's home in eastern Montana in 1987 and opened fire, killing the boy's parents and grandmother. Brooks survived because the rifle jammed, but the gunman then swung it like a bat, delivering a severe head injury.

The brain injury and psychological trauma haunted him, his siblings told The Washington Post recently. He turned to drugs and booze to stave off the darkness, but the darkness finally won. After succumbing to liver failure, half of his ashes were left in an urn at his parents' gravesite, and half scattered in the Yellowstone River.

There is no calendar for when the psychological trauma ends. Clai Lasher-Sommers was severely wounded more than a half-century ago, at age 13, by her stepfather. This past summer, she told Boston radio station WBUR that she still felt the effects of post-traumatic stress.

“You do not ever get rid of PTSD,” Lasher-Sommers said. “I don't know anyone who has ever gotten over it.”

These are individual stories of pain, suffering and, in two of

By **SCOTT MARTELLE**

Los Angeles Times

*Scott Martelle, who joined the Los Angeles Times' editorial board in 2014, is a veteran journalist and author of six history books.*



the cases, eventual death arising from encounters with someone carrying a weapon and bent on hurting others.

Those experiences are at once individual and universal because there are so many of them. So far this year, the Gun Violence Archive reports more than 26,000 people have been wounded or injured in acts of gun violence, a pace of about 95 people a day.

When coverage of shootings breaks into the public consciousness, people tend to focus on the dead. The finality rivets us.






But the wounded, the scarred, are just as much a part of the violent act. They are living memorials to a national scourge, and there are so many of them—more than 143,000 over the past five years.

The number grows by the day.

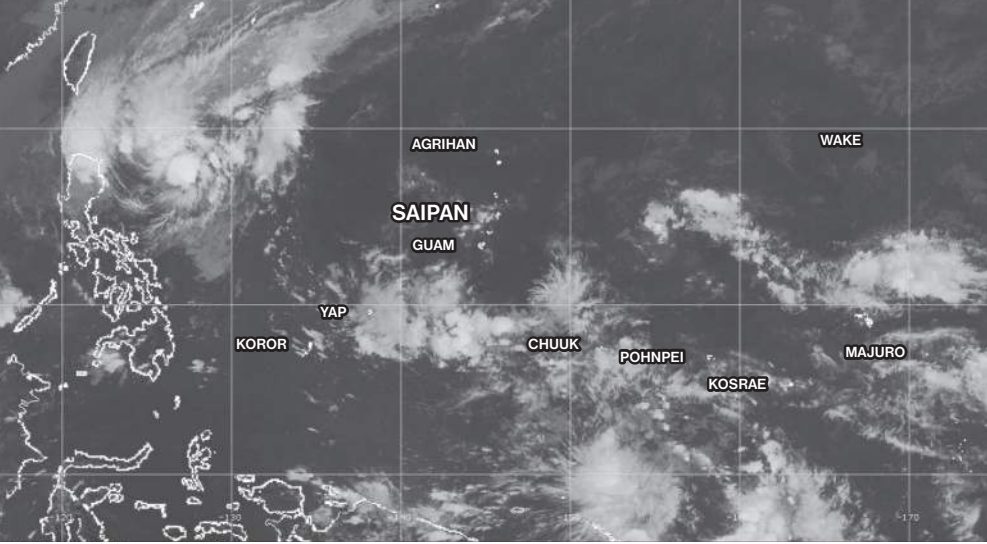


# The Weather

## 5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Partly sunny with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.		Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds 20 to 25 mph.		Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.		Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.		Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.	
88°	77°	87°	77°	88°	77°	87°	77°	87°	77°

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



**PICTURE TIME: 8:00 AM, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2019**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Guam radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas waters, mainly in a line that is swiftly approaching both Rota and Tinian. The VAD wind profile indicates east winds of 14 to 21 knots just off the surface which then increase to between 18 and 25 knots through the lowest 6 thousand feet of the air. Last night`s weather balloon reports that this is deep layer easterly flow, extending above 50 thousand feet, ranging between 22 and 34 knots above 6 thousand feet. The buoys reveal combined seas of 5 to 7 feet composed of east wind waves and east-northeast trade-wind swell waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 76°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 76°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	66° / 55°	
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	50° / 39°	
Hong Kong	Sunny	81° / 70°	
Honolulu	Windy	85° / 75°	
London	Showers	46° / 39°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	66° / 53°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 79°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	72° / 52°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 72°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	54° / 45°	
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	61° / 45°	
Paris	Partly Cloudy	48° / 41°	
Busan	Mostly Sunny	66° / 50°	
Rome	Showers	57° / 50°	
Salem	Mostly Sunny	68° / 50°	
San Francisco	Sunny	60° / 48°	
Seoul	Sunny	59° / 39°	
Tokyo	Rain	54° / 48°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	53° / 47°	



### NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.net](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.net)

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
1:21 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.33	
8:27 AM	LOW TIDE	0.02	
3:41 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.83	
10:08 PM	LOW TIDE	0.72	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:21 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:21 AM	5:43 PM
Saturday	6:22 AM	5:43 PM
Sunday	6:22 AM	5:43 PM
Monday	6:23 AM	5:43 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	12:50 AM	1:41 PM	-
Friday	1:48 AM	2:26 PM	-
Saturday	2:45 AM	3:10 PM	-
Sunday	3:43 AM	3:55 PM	-
Monday	4:41 AM	4:41 PM	-

**NEWS DESK** For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: [editor@saipantribune.com](mailto:editor@saipantribune.com). Website:[www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

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**SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 27, 2019							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:10am	Daily
UA105	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4	UA104	4:50pm	5:30pm	2, 4
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	8:00am	1:20pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:10am	1	OZ623	8:55am	2:30pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:25am	3, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 4, 5, 6	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ6243	3:20pm	7:10pm	2, 4, 6	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ624	3:50pm	7:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily				
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)				HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN			
JD396	7:30am	12:05pm	1	JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4	JD395	8:50pm	5:00am+1	7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:30am	7:50am	2, 6	3U8645	8:10pm	3:10am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	6:00am	3, 5, 7	MU763	4:50pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA184/174	12:40am	8:07am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:07am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
				UA184/174	10:55pm	8:07am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	1:20pm+1	1, 3, 5 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	2:30pm+1	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:30am	1:20pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:30am	2:30pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:35am	8:25am	1	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UO43	5:50am	8:40am	3, 5, 7	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:20pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	UO42	6:25pm	1:20am+1	7
OZ624/9661	3:50pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	UO42	9:25pm	4:20am+1	2, 4, 6
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
				2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
				2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
				2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily



# Business

## Business Person of the Year Gala on Jan. 25

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is accepting nominations for the 2019 Business Person of the Year. This prestigious award will be announced at the annual Business Person of the Year Gala slated for Jan. 25, 2020 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan Ballroom from 6pm to 10pm.

The Chamber is also ringing in the new year by honoring one of the most memorable, fun, and fashionable decades—The Roaring '20s.

In addition to the BPOY award, the Chamber will also be presenting the 2019 Saipan Young Professional of the Year Award, 2019 Non-Profit of the Year Award, 2019 Small Business of the Year Award, and 2019 Chamber Member of the Year Award.

Another highlight of the event will include the installation of the 2020-2021 board of directors. The 2020 board includes re-elected Alex Sablan (TanHoldings), Mike Johnson (Deloitte & Touche), Velma Palacios (IT&E), newly elected Glen Hunter (The Shack), and incumbent members Marcia Calvo (Calvo's Insurance), Joe Guerrero (Joint Marketing), Janel Pangelinan (Pacifica Insurance Underwriters Inc.), Ty Pauling (Hyatt Regency), and Shayne Villanueva (Aon Insurance).

Seats to event are limited and available for advance



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Velma Palacios, IT&E Network Operations and Engineering director, will be one of the board members to be inducted this Jan. 25 in the Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year Gala.

purchase for \$100 per person. Tickets include a formal sit-down dinner, networking, and a night celebrating the movers and shakers of our community. Dress attire is formal. The event will be held from 6pm to 10pm. The Chamber hopes to see all Chamber members, potential members, government offi-

cials, and all individuals in our community for this night of celebration.

Each guest will have the opportunity to participate in a silent auction that will feature a variety of prizes donated by Chamber members. Proceeds of the auction will support the future initiatives of the Chamber including workforce readi-

ness, educational advancement, business development, and sustainable economic development.

The nominations for Business Person of the Year will be judged by the prior recipients of this award and by the four officers of the Chamber board. Prior BPOY awardees include: Velma Palacios of IT&E (2018), Ivan Quichocho of TanHoldings (2017), Mike Sablan of Triple J (2016), Alex Youn of AC Pacific (2015), Vicky Benavente of Pacific Islands Club (2014), Marcie Tomokane of Bank of Guam (2013), Marcia E. Ayuyu of R.J. Corp. (2012) and +Anthony Pellegrino of Saipan Sea Ventures (2012), James Arenovski of Delta Management Corp. (2011), Bob Jones of Triple J Corp. (2010), Ben Babauta of DFS Saipan (2009), Kathryn H. Barry of KB Communications (2008), K.J. Kim of Asiana Airlines (2007), Juan T. Guerrero of

Herman's Bakery/MITA Travel (2006), David M. Sablan Sr. of Century Insurance (2005), Mark Erwin of Continental Airlines (2004), Jerry Tan of TanHoldings (2003), Alex Sablan of Saipan Shipping Co. (2002), Jay B. Jones of Triple J Motors (2001), Wendi S. Herring of Pacific Islands Club (2000), Marian Aldan-Pierce of DFS Saipan (1999), Joe C. Ayuyu of McDonald's Saipan (1998), +Edward Camacho of Pacific Financial Corp. (1997), and Efrain F. Camacho of EFC Engineers and Architects (1996).

Each nominee for Business Person of the Year must be a member of the Chamber and must reside on Saipan. Qualifying criteria includes active personal participation in the Chamber's committees, events, programs, and meetings; active community involvement and contributions; and being widely recognized for his/her area of expertise.

The community is invited to submit their nominations to SCC Executive Director, Maxine Laszlo at executive@saipanchamber.com on or before Wednesday, November 27, 2019 at 5pm.

To order tickets, email Mercilynn at administrator@saipanchamber.com, call 234-7150, or visit the third floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe for more information.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower our enterprises as a resource, advocate, and connector for Saipan's private sector. Its vision is to create an island where businesses, family, and community succeed as one. For more information regarding Saipan Chamber of Commerce updates, please visit our website at saipanchamber.com, call (670) 234-7150 or visit us on the 3rd floor of the Marianas Business Plaza, Suite #315. (PR)

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### Man charged in \$300M Ponzi scheme with veterans, investors

**SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP)**—South Carolina authorities have charged a man from southern California with conspiracy to engage in mail and wire fraud after prosecutors say he defrauded about 2,600 people, including many veterans. The Orange County Register reported Monday that 64-year-old Scott Kohn was arraigned Nov. 13 along with his company Future Income Payments which operated the alleged scheme. Prosecutors say the company stopped doing business in 2018 before paying \$300 million owned to investors. U.S. Attorney's Office officials say many of the pension holders are veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Prosecutors say pension holders made monthly payments and the company solicited investors to buy those payments disguised as cash flows. A lawyer for Kohn could not be reached. Authorities say Kohn could face 20 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

#### Nerf gun, Power Rangers claw cited by toy safety watchdog

**BOSTON (AP)**—A Nerf dart gun, ice cream-scented Nickelodeon slime and a plastic Power Rangers claw are among the toys topping a consumer safety group's list of worst toys for the holidays. World Against Toys Causing Harm unveiled its annual list Tuesday at a Boston children's hospital. A realistic toy machine gun, a "pogo trick board," a yeti teddy bear and a pull-along caterpillar toy for infants also made the list. The Massachusetts nonprofit has been releasing the list for more than 40 years. It says many of the products present choking, eye and

other safety hazards frequently found in poorly designed toys. It also cites the products for having inconsistent and inadequate warnings labels. The organization says the Nerf Ultra One gun, which is billed as firing soft darts up to 120 feet (37 meters), shoots the projectiles with enough force to potentially cause eye injuries. It also says the warning label on Flybar's Pogo Trick Board tells children to wear protection, but the product's packaging features a child using the device without a wearing a helmet or other protection.

#### Disney Plus user accounts already found on hacking sites

Disney says its new Disney Plus streaming service doesn't have a security breach, but some users have been shut out after hackers tried to break into their accounts. The news site ZDNet found stolen account usernames and passwords selling for \$3 on underground hacking forums. Disney's streaming service costs \$7 a month or \$70 a year. Disney Plus comes as Disney and other traditional media companies seek to siphon the subscription revenue now going to Netflix and other streaming giants. Disney is hoping to attract millions of subscribers with its mix of Marvel and Star Wars movies and shows, classic animated films and new series. Helped by promotions, including a free year for some Verizon customers, the new service attracted 10 million subscribers the day it launched last week. The popularity led to some technical difficulties in the opening hours. Those problems have largely been resolved. Disney says there's no indication of a security breach compromising passwords. It says it takes the privacy and security of users' data seriously.

## Safety board favors redesign of engine part on Boeing 737s

Federal safety officials say Boeing should redesign part of the casing on some engines to prevent the kind of accident that occurred when engine debris blew out a window on a Southwest Airlines plane and killed a passenger.

The National Transportation Safety Board determined Tuesday that the April 2018 accident was caused by a cracked fan blade that broke off in flight, hitting the engine case at a critical location. Parts of the engine turned into shrapnel, striking the fuselage.

After a harrowing emergency descent from 32,000 feet (9,750 meters), with one passenger blown partly out of the plane, the pilots of Southwest flight 1380 were able to

land the crippled Boeing 737 in Philadelphia.

Safety board Chairman Robert Sumwalt said engine and aircraft manufacturers should develop stronger designs for engine casing to prevent broken fan blades from ever causing such catastrophic damage again.

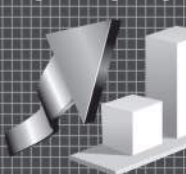
"That translates to a better chance that damage to the aircraft will be minimized during a (broken fan blade) event, improving the safety of the flying public," Sumwalt said.

The events of flight 1380 led to more frequent and intensive inspections of fan blades on certain engines made by CFM International, a joint venture between General Electric Co. and France's

Safran SA. Those checks at Southwest and other airlines turned up about 15 other fan blades with slowly spreading cracks from fatigue or wear during normal use.

A Southwest 737 suffered a similar engine break-up in 2016, but pilots landed safely in Pensacola, Florida. NTSB investigator Pierre Scarfo said the board found no evidence to believe that the fan blade problem was unique to maintenance or operations at Southwest, which has the world's largest 737 fleet. However, earlier this year the Transportation Department's inspector general cited the Philadelphia incident among the reasons that it was reviewing government oversight of the airline.

### STOCK PORTFOLIO



### LEADING INDICATORS

#### S&P

3,120.18

-1.85

-0.06%

#### DOW

27,934.02

-102.18

-0.36%

#### NASDAQ

8,570.66

+20.72

+0.24%

### EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

		Hong Kong Dollar	7.83	Russian Ruble	63.76
Australian Dollar	1.47	Indian Rupee	71.00	Singapore Dollar	1.36
British Pound	0.77	Japanese Yen	108.47	South Korean Won	1,147.66
Canadian Dollar	1.33	Malaysian Ringgit	4.11	Swiss Franc	0.99
Chinese Yuan	6.91	New Zealand Dollar	1.56	Taiwan Dollar	29.98
Euro	0.90	Philippine Peso	49.90	Thailand Baht	30.14















# Nation

## Ruling backs asylum seekers at border prior to policy shift

**SAN DIEGO (AP)**—A federal judge ruled Tuesday that a partial ban on asylum does not apply to anyone who appeared at an official U.S. border crossing before the policy was announced in July, a decision that may affect thousands of people.

The Trump administration announced July 16 that it would deny asylum to anyone who traveled through another country without applying there first. The ban was on hold until the U.S. Supreme Court decided Sept. 11 that it could take effect during a legal challenge.

Immigrant advocates went to court on behalf of migrants who heeded instructions of the U.S. government and waited at official crossings to request asylum, rather than cross the border illegally.

The advocates said the administration engaged in an “immoral bait-and-switch” against those immigrants by imposing the ban after they arrived at the border crossing.

U.S. District Judge Cynthia Bashant ruled in their favor Tuesday, saying anyone who appeared at a U.S. border crossing with Mexico before July 16 would be exempt



In this Sept. 26, 2019 file photo volunteers in Tijuana, Mexico, call names from a waiting list of people to claim asylum at a border crossing in San Diego.

from the ban.

“(These) asylum seekers understood their access to asylum in the United States to be premised on their willingness to wait in Mexico,” Bashant wrote. “In reliance on this representation by the

U.S. Government, they did so. The Government — in a shift that can be considered, at best, misleading, and at worst, duplicitous — now seeks to change course.”

Faced with a surge in asylum-seeking families last year,

the U.S. said there wasn’t enough processing capacity at official crossings and began telling people to wait in Mexico to claim asylum. The practice, known as “metering,” has left many waiting months.

The number of names on waiting lists in 11 Mexican border cities totaled nearly 21,400 this month, accord-

ing to a survey by the Strauss Center for International Security and Law at the University of Texas, Austin and the Center for U.S.-Mexico Studies at the University of California, San Diego.

In Tijuana, the waiting list hovers below 9,000 names. People whose names were getting called last week said

they had been waiting in Mexico for five months.

The U.S. does not manage the waiting lists, spawning haphazard systems that vary by city. Over time, they have been overseen by Mexican federal, state and local officials, Mexican migrant shelters and immigrants themselves.

The lack of U.S. control or centralized management of the lists makes it difficult to know how many asylum seekers will benefit from Tuesday’s ruling. Attorneys for the plaintiffs estimate it is in the thousands.

Neither the Justice nor Homeland Security Departments responded to requests for comment.

Groups representing asylum seekers applauded the ruling.

“These asylum seekers have a deep commitment to following our laws in seeking protection, and we are relieved to see that their decision to follow our government’s instructions to wait in Mexico will not prejudice their chances for relief,” said Erika Pinheiro, director of litigation and policy at Al Otro Lado, which was represented by the Southern Poverty Law Center, Center for Constitutional Rights, and American Immigration Council.

## Unpredictable Sondland faces questions about Trump, Ukraine

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Ambassador Gordon Sondland, the most anticipated witness in the impeachment inquiry, is likely to be unpredictable when he faces questions about his evolving accounts of the Trump administration’s dealings with Ukraine and a newly revealed summertime phone call with President Donald Trump.

Sondland, a wealthy hotelier Trump tapped as his ambassador to the European Union, is more directly entangled than any witness yet in the president’s efforts to get Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden and Democrats in the 2016 election. Yet Sondland has already changed amended his testimony once — “I now do recall,” he said, talking to Ukraine about investigations.

Sondland’s appearance at Wednesday morning’s hearing, and his closeness to Trump, is of particular concern to the White House as the historic impeachment inquiry reaches closer to the president, pushing through an intense week with nine witnesses testifying over three days in back-to-back sessions.

Trump has recently tried to suggest that he barely knows his hand-picked ambassador,

but Sondland has said he has spoken several times with the president and was acting on his direction.

The envoy is likely to face tough questions from lawmakers of both parties about Trump’s July 25 call when he asked Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for the political investigations at the same time as U.S. military aid for the ally was being stalled.

Sondland routinely bragged about his proximity to Trump and drew alarm from the foreign service and national security apparatus as part of an irregular channel of diplomacy led by the president’s lawyer, Rudy Giuliani.

Last week State Department official David Holmes revealed one of those interactions to impeachment investigators, saying he recalled it “vividly.”

The political counselor was having lunch with Sondland in Kyiv when the ambassador dialed up the the president on his cell phone and Holmes could hear Trump’s voice.

“I then heard President Trump ask, quote, ‘So he’s going to do the investigation?’” Holmes testified. “Ambassador Sondland replied that ‘He’s going to do it,’ adding that President Zel-

enskyy will, quote, ‘do anything you ask him to.’”

Sondland was known for telling others “he was in charge of Ukraine” despite being the U.S. envoy in Brussels, said another witness in the impeachment probe, former White House Russia adviser Fiona Hill.

“And I asked, well, on whose authority?” said Hill, who will testify Thursday. “And he said, the President.”

Sondland’s appearance follows the testimony Tuesday of four national security and diplomatic officials, including a career Army officer who described Trump’s call with Zelenskyy as “improper.”

Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman told lawmakers it was his “duty” to report his concerns about the call, as he deflected Republican attacks, including from the White House on his loyalty and career in public service.

It wasn’t the first time Vindland had registered his concerns over Ukraine policy. He testified about a July 10 meeting at the White House when Sondland told visiting Ukraine officials they would need to “deliver” before the administration would agree to a meeting Zelenskyy wanted with Trump.

## AMA calls for total ban on all e-cigarette, vaping products

The American Medical Association on Tuesday called for an immediate ban on all electronic cigarettes and vaping devices.

The group adopted the sweeping stance at a policy-making meeting in San Diego. It aims to lobby for state and federal laws, regulations or legal action to achieve a ban, but the industry is sure to fight back.

The AMA cited a surge in underage teen use of e-cigarettes, which typically heat a solution that contains nicotine.

“It’s simple, we must keep nicotine products out of the hands of young people,” Dr. Patrice Harris, AMA’s president, said in a statement.

The doctors’ group said a separate health issue also prompted its action — the recent U.S. outbreak of lung illnesses linked to vaping. Most of those sickened said they vaped THC, the high-inducing ingredient in marijuana, not nicotine. Officials believe a thickening agent used in black market THC vaping products may be a culprit.

The outbreak has “shined a light on the fact that we have very little evidence about the short- and long-term health

consequences of e-cigarettes and vaping products,” Harris said. About 2,100 people have gotten sick; 42 have died.

The AMA has previously sought bans on e-cigarette flavors and ads.

Some observers say the AMA’s position is flawed and has little chance of achieving a sweeping ban.

“I would be 100% with the AMA if they were seeking a ban on all tobacco products that are smoked, including e-cigarettes,” said Jonathan Foulds, a tobacco addiction specialist at Penn State University. “But right now, nicotine electronic cigarettes are competing with and replacing the most harmful legal product in this country.”

Gregory Conley, president of the American Vaping Association, a pro-vaping advocacy group, said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has made clear that its focus “is not store-bought nicotine vaping products, but illicit contaminated THC oil cartridges sold by drug dealers.”

“It would be a mistake for adult smokers and their families to listen to these mis-

guided prohibitionists, as the evidence continues to indicate that adult smokers who switch to nicotine vaping products greatly improve their health,” Conley said.

The AMA policy calls for a ban of vaping products not approved to help people quit. But so far, none have been reviewed or approved for that use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Stephanie Caccamo, an FDA press officer, said the agency is “committed to doing everything we can to prevent kids from using tobacco products and will continue to develop a policy approach that aligns with that concern.”

Juul Labs, the nation’s biggest e-cigarette maker, didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment.

E-cigarettes first appeared in the U.S. more than a decade ago and have grown in popularity despite little research on their long-term effects. The FDA has been widely criticized for repeatedly pushing back its own deadline to begin reviewing thousands of vaping products on the market, at one point until 2022. The deadline is now next May. (AP)



# Asia

## Esper urges 'very public posture' on Chinese sea claims

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—The U.S. defense chief on Tuesday urged governments affected by China's sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea "to take a very public posture" and assert their sovereign rights, adding that acting collectively is the best way to send a message "to get China on the right path."

Defense Secretary Mark Esper raised concerns over China's increasingly assertive actions in the disputed waters in a news conference after meeting his Philippine counterpart, Delfin Lorenzana, in Manila, his latest stop in an Asian tour.

The disputes have long been a major point of contention between Washington and Beijing, whose vast territorial claims in the strategic waterway overlap with five other governments, including the Philippines, a U.S. treaty ally.

Washington lays no claims to the busy waters but has declared that freedom of navigation and overflight and the peaceful resolution of the disputes are in the U.S. national interest. China has repeatedly warned the U.S. to stay out of what it calls a purely Asian dispute.

In an Asian defense meeting that he attended in Thailand, Esper said most participants were "very concerned about China's excessive claims" and



U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper, right, shakes hands with his Philippine counterpart Delfin Lorenzana after a press conference at the Philippine Department of National Defense in Quezon city, metropolitan Manila, Philippines Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019.

its lack of compliance with international laws and norms. The meetings were led by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Four members of the 10-nation bloc have

been embroiled in the territorial rifts along with China and Taiwan.

Tensions have escalated in recent years after China built missile-protected islands on

seven disputed reefs, three of which have military-grade runways. There have been reports that China has used one of its new island bases to resupply ships that have been accused by rival claimants like Vietnam and Malaysia of encroaching into their waters in recent months.

"I think it's incumbent upon all of us to take a very public posture and to assert our sovereign rights and to emphasize the importance of law," Esper told reporters in Manila.

U.S. forces have conducted more freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea in the past year than in previous

years to highlight the importance of adherence to international law, Esper said, referring to sail-bys by U.S. Navy ships close to China-claimed islands that have infuriated Beijing.

"The clear signal we're trying to send is not that we oppose China per se but that we all stand for international rules, international laws," he said. "We think China should abide by them as well and that acting collectively is the best way to send that message and to get China on the right path."

In Bangkok, Esper briefly met his Chinese counterpart, Gen. Wei Fenghe, on Monday on the sidelines of the Asian defense meeting. A spokesman for the Chinese Ministry of Defense, Col. Wu Qian, told reporters in Bangkok that the South China Sea disputes were among numerous issues discussed by the two.

Wu said Esper and Wei had a "very positive and constructive" meeting and "agreed in many areas." But he was clear that Beijing is irritated at the U.S. Navy's presence in the South China Sea. Wei reaffirmed China's commitment to safeguarding its "territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests" in the South China Sea, Wu said.

"The Chinese side also urges the U.S. side to stop flexing muscles in the South China Sea and do not provoke and escalate tensions in the South China Sea," Wu said through a Chinese interpreter.

## N. Korea snubs US move to postpone military drill with South

**SEOUL, South Korea** (AP)—North Korea said Tuesday it won't consider a recent U.S. decision to postpone a joint military exercise with South Korea a major concession that can bring it back to nuclear talks.

Senior North Korean official Kim Yong Chol said the U.S. must completely scrap that military drill and abandon its hostility against his country if it wants to see the resumption of the nuclear negotiations.

Kim's comments were the first direct response to an announcement Sunday by U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper and his South Korean counterpart that the allies have indefinitely postponed the annual Vigilant Ace training in an "act of goodwill" toward North Korea. The moves were regarded as an effort to convince North Korea to revive the nuclear talks that largely have stalled since the February collapse of a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

"The U.S. tries to make a

good impression as if it contributes to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, describing the suspension (of the aerial drill) as 'consideration for and concession' to someone," Kim Yong Chol said in a statement carried by state media. "But we demand that the U.S. quit the drill or stop it once and for all."

North Korea wants the United States to lift international sanctions on it, provide security guarantees and make other concessions in return for abandoning its advancing nuclear arsenal. The February summit in Vietnam, the second such meeting between Trump and Kim Jong Un, fell apart after Trump rejected Kim's demand for sweeping sanctions relief in exchange of dismantling his main complex to produce nuclear ingredients, a limited disarmament step.

The two leaders held an impromptu, brief meeting at the Korean border in late June and agreed to restart diplomacy. In early October, their nuclear negotiators eventually resumed talks in Swe-

den, but the meeting failed to report progress.

North Korea said last week the U.S. recently proposed via an unidentified third country its offer to meet again in December. North Korea still said differences between the two countries won't be addressed with minor concessions like establishing a liaison office between the countries or formally declaring the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Kim Myong Gil, roving ambassador at the North's Foreign Ministry, disclosed Tuesday it was Sweden which conveyed the U.S. dialogue proposal. He said North Korea wants the U.S. not to go through a third country to offer talks and Sweden not to try to mediate in North Korea-U.S. diplomacy.

"It is not for lack of communication channel or mediator that (North Korea)-U.S. negotiations have not yet been held," Kim said. "The Swedish side would be well-advised to properly understand the situation and behave itself."

## Pope heading to Thailand to encourage Catholic minority

**VATICAN CITY** (AP)—Pope Francis is heading to Thailand to encourage members of a minority Catholic community in a Buddhist nation and highlight his admiration for their missionary ancestors who brought the faith centuries ago and endured bouts of persecution more recently.

After an overnight flight, Francis arrives in Bangkok on Wednesday afternoon and will rest for the remainder of the day before his first full day of public appearances Thursday.

Francis' three-day visit, followed by three days in Japan, will be a welcome break for the 82-year-old pope. He is enduring fresh opposition from Catholic conservatives in the U.S. over his just-concluded meeting on the Amazon as well as a new financial scandal at home.

Leaving those concerns behind, Francis will meet with Thailand's supreme Buddhist leader, Thai authorities as well

as all the Catholic bishops of Asia—a rare chance for him to address some of the major challenges facing the Catholic Church in the region and the men responsible for dealing with them.

On the eve of the trip, the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, said interfaith relations and emphasizing the dignity of every person are likely to be raised—a reference perhaps to Thailand's role as a key transit point for victims of human trafficking, forced labor and the sex trade. Francis has made the fight against human trafficking a hallmark of his papacy.

Francis is also expected to encourage the Catholic community, which represents just 0.58 percent of its 69 million people, as well as encourage the largely Buddhist country to continue welcoming migrants and showing tolerance to people of other faiths. That message is also intended to reach the small Muslim com-

munity amid a persistent insurgency in the south.

Thirty-five years after St. John Paul II became the first pope to visit Thailand, Francis is marking the 350th anniversary of the creation of a stable apostolic vicariate in Thailand, then known as Siam, after Dominican missionaries first brought the faith in 1567, followed by members of Francis' own Jesuit order.

Francis will pray at the tomb of Nicholas Bunker Kitbamrung, known as the Rev. Benedikto Chunkim, who became the first martyred priest of modern Thailand when he was killed in 1944. Francis is also likely to refer to seven other martyrs killed in 1940 as a nationalistic government sought to convert all Thais to Buddhists.

Throughout his visit, he will have a special interpreter by his side: his second cousin, Sister Ana Rosa Sivori, who has been a missionary in Thailand since the 1960s.



# World

## Amnesty says over 106 dead in protests, which Iran disputes

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP)**—Days of protests over rising fuel prices and a subsequent government crackdown have killed at least 106 people across Iran, Amnesty International said Tuesday, adding that the real figure may be much higher.

Iran's government has not released a toll of those arrested, injured or killed in the protests that began Friday and spread quickly across at least 100 cities and towns. But it disputed Amnesty's report through its mission to the United Nations, calling it "baseless allegations and fabricated figures."

However, a U.N. agency earlier said it feared the unrest may have killed "a significant

number of people." Amnesty cited "credible reports" for its tally and said it "believes that the real death toll may be much higher, with some reports suggesting as many as 200 have been killed."

Iranian authorities shut down internet access to the outside world Saturday, an outage has left only state media and government officials able to say what is happening in the nation of 80 million.

State television showed video Tuesday of burned Qurans at a mosque in the suburbs of the capital, Tehran, as well as pro-government rallies, part of its efforts to both demonize and minimize the protests.

Absent in the coverage was

an acknowledgement of what sparked the demonstrations. The jump in gasoline prices represents yet another burden on Iranians who have suffered through a painful currency collapse, following President Donald Trump's unilateral withdrawal of the United States from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, and the reimposition of crippling U.S. economic sanctions.

Relatively moderate President Hassan Rouhani has promised the fuel price increase will fund new subsidies for poor families. But the decision has unleashed anger among Iranians, like Maryam Kazemi, a 29-year-old accountant in the southern

Tehran suburb of Khaniabad, who said the new cost of fuel was "putting pressure on ordinary people."

"It was a bad decision at a bad time. The economic situation has long been difficult for people, and Rouhani unexpectedly implemented the decision on fuel," she said.

Amnesty said it gathered its figures from interviewing journalists and human rights activists, then cross-checked the information. In its breakdown, it showed the hardest-hit areas as the western Kermanshah province and its oil-rich southwestern province of Khuzestan. Many online videos released before the internet outage had shown

unrest there.

"Video footage shows security forces using firearms, water cannons and tear gas to disperse protests and beating demonstrators with batons," Amnesty said. "Images of bullet casings left on the ground afterwards, as well as

the resulting high death toll, indicate that they used live ammunition."

Amnesty, citing eyewitnesses corroborated by video footage, said snipers also shot into crowds of people from rooftops and, in one case, a helicopter.

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Sweden drops Assange rape investigation after 9 years

**STOCKHOLM (AP)**—Sweden on Tuesday dropped its investigation into an alleged rape by WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, who is currently in prison in Britain, because too much time has elapsed since the accusation was made over nine years ago. Assange, who is battling an extradition attempt by the U.S. so he can face spying charges related to his WikiLeaks work, has always denied the allegations made against him during a visit to Stockholm in August 2010. "Nine years have gone," Swedish prosecutor Eve-Marie Persson said. "Time is a player in this. The oral evidence has weakened as time has passed." Though the victim "submitted a credible and reliable version of events," Persson said "the memory fades for natural reasons." Still, Persson said her statements "have been coherent, extensive and detailed." Elisabeth Massi Fritz, the lawyer for the rape victim—a Swedish woman who was never identified—told Swedish broadcaster SVT that "the plaintiff's information is supported by heavy written evidence plus verbal evidence in the form of doctors who examined the plaintiff."

for Berlin state prosecutors. The suspect had obtained information online on how to build bombs and talked about planning an attack in internet chats, and an "allied foreign intelligence service" provided the information to German authorities, Berlin's top security official Andreas Geisel told the dpa news agency. Steltner would not comment on where the tip came from, but a U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the case told The Associated Press it had come from law enforcement and intelligence cooperation between American and German authorities.

#### Brazil police say cop to blame for 8-year-old girl's death

**RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)**—A police officer fired the shot that killed an 8-year-old girl in Rio de Janeiro this year, authorities said Tuesday, a finding that bolstered complaints by activists that the collateral damage of a crackdown on crime is too high. Ágatha Sales Félix was inside a van Sept. 20 when she was shot in the back. The incident took place in the Complexo do Alemão favela, a vast working-class community in the northern part of Rio. The girl's death struck a chord in a city where police violence is on the rise and there is little accountability. Rio's officers, as in the case of Ágatha, almost always justify on-duty killings by claiming self-defense in the face of armed criminals. The investigation provides a rare example of authorities saying an officer misrepresented events to avoid punishment and it recommends he be charged with murder. "This police officer lied," said Marcus Drucker, who led the investigation. The officer initially reported using his gun to target an armed suspect on a motorcycle, authorities said. The investigation discredited his claim, saying neither the driver nor passenger of the motorcycle possessed a weapon, according to some 10 witnesses.



In this photo taken Monday, Nov. 18, 2019, and released by Iranian Students' News Agency, ISNA, people walk past buildings which burned during protests that followed the authorities' decision to raise gasoline prices, in the city of Karaj, west of the capital Tehran, Iran.

## Israel strikes Iranian targets in Syria; 2 reported killed

**JERUSALEM (AP)**—The Israeli military said it struck dozens of Iranian targets in Syria on Wednesday, carrying out a "wide-scale" strike in response to rocket fire on the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights the day before. Syrian state media reported that two civilians were killed.

The military said its fighter jets hit multiple targets belonging to Iran's elite Quds force, including surface-to-air missiles, weapons warehouses and military bases. After the Syrian military fired an air defense missile, the Israeli military said a number of Syrian aerial defense batteries were also destroyed.

Syria's SANA news agency said the two people were killed by shrapnel when an Israeli missile hit a house in the town of Saasaa, southwest of Damascus.

The report also said several others were wounded in the airstrikes near the capital, Damascus, including a girl in a residential building in the suburb of Qudsaya, west of the Syrian capital. It claimed that Syrian air defenses destroyed most of the Israeli missiles before they reached their targets.

The strikes further burst into the open what's been a long shadow war between Israel and its archenemy Iran. The two foes have increasingly clashed over what Israel says is Iran's deeper presence along its borders.

"Yesterday's Iranian attack towards Israel is further clear proof of the purpose of the Iranian entrenchment in Syria, which threatens Israeli security, regional stability and the Syrian regime," the military said in a statement, adding that it would "continue operating

firmly and resolutely" against Iran in Syria.

Israel intercepted the four rockets on the Golan Heights on Tuesday, which came amid heightened tensions between Israel and Iranian proxies along its borders. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has issued a series of warnings recently about Iranian aggression throughout the Middle East and has vowed to respond firmly.

"I made it clear: whoever harms us, we will harm them. That's what we did tonight," he said early Wednesday. "We will continue to aggressively protect Israel's security."

Israel's new hard-line defense minister, Naftali Bennett, issued an equally firm statement.

"The rules have changed: whoever fires on Israel during the day will not sleep at night,"

he said. "Our message to the leaders of Iran is simple: you are no longer immune. Any place you dispatch your tentacles, we will chop them off."

The rare rocket fire comes a week after an Israeli airstrike against a top Palestinian militant based in Syria. Akram al-Ajouri, a member of the leadership of the militant Islamic Jihad group who is living in exile, survived the attack but his son and granddaughter were killed.

Israel frequently strikes Iranian interests in Syria. But last week's airstrike appeared to be a rare assassination attempt of a Palestinian militant in the Syrian capital. It came the same day as another Israeli airstrike killed a senior Islamic Jihad commander in Gaza, settling off the fiercest round of fighting there in years.



# Environment

**WASHINGTON—** Love those dainty little bottles of shampoo, conditioner and hand lotion in hotel bathrooms? Do you take them home, use them for guests or donate them to the local homeless shelter? You won't be able to for much longer — states, localities and some hotel chains are scrapping the tiny amenities.

The bottle bans follow recent efforts to curb other single-use plastic products, including shopping bags, eating utensils, straws and balloons. Supporters say the moves will reduce the amount of plastic waste filling landfills and polluting the seas.

California enacted a law earlier this year, set to take effect in 2023, banning the mostly 1- to 2-ounce bottles. New York state is considering a similar measure, and local jurisdictions such as Fulton County (Atlanta), Ga., also are getting into the act.

Even without legislation, Marriott International, Hyatt Hotels and the company that owns Holiday Inn plan to replace the single-use bottles with large pump dispensers. Marriott said eliminating 500 million small bottles a year will save 1.7 million pounds of plastic.

But opponents worry about the economic hit to the personal product and plastics industries, and many see meddling by the state in personal choices. The plastics industry opposes the bills because “product bans are not a long-term solution to the plastic waste issue,” said Shannon Crawford, spokeswoman for the Plastics Industry Association. “Expanding and enhancing our current recycling infrastructure is.”

Travel industry analysts say hotels — with the possible exception of very high-end lodging where luxury amenities are part of the experience — should welcome the bans as a money-saver. They also will help hotels appeal to environmentally conscious customers.

“I see what’s going on with hotels as part of this larger trend,” said Henry Harteveldt, president of Atmosphere Research Group in San Francisco, a travel analytics firm. “None of these small actions will save our planet individually. But collectively, if we can reduce waste, it’s good.”

But he pointed out that the hotels’ actions are not completely selfless.

“It’s what I call a ‘green-washing’ move,” he said. “The hotels are wrapping a sustainability message around a move that will help them save



Cute little bottles of shampoo and other toiletries are ubiquitous in hotels across the country. But new laws and hotel chain practices designed to cut down on plastic waste mean they are being phased out.

TNS

## BAN on hotel toiletries is latest effort to curb PLASTIC WASTE

By **ELAINE S. POVICH**  
Stateline.org

money on toiletries. There’s nothing wrong with saving money on toiletries, and it will reduce some waste.”

Many hotels already post signs urging guests to reuse their towels as a way to save water — an environmentally friendly move that also happens to reduce laundering costs.

The California law will prohibit a container of 12 ounces or fewer from being set out in hotels unless a customer asks for one. In general, hotels plan to replace the small bottles with multi-use dispensers mounted on shower walls. Hotels with more than 50 rooms must comply by 2023 and smaller hotels by 2024. The bill does not apply to Airbnb or other short-term rental platforms.

“This bill is a win-win (for industry),” said California Assemblyman Ash Kalra, a Democrat from San Jose. “It does force the issue by putting in a timeline when they have to phase out (the bottles). Ultimately they save money, but you have to have this instigation to get them moving. Just because it’s a cost savings doesn’t mean hotels are going to do it, because there’s an up-front cost for dispensers.”

But opponents, like California Republican Assemblyman James Gallagher, who voted

against the bill, said it’s too much fuss over not very much.

“Let’s start with the fact that, in California, we have wildfires, power outages, skyrocketing crime, homelessness and poverty. I feel like banning shampoo bottles is not high on the priority list for me,” he said in a phone call. “I don’t really think it’s that much of a problem. They (the bottles) can be recycled. I kind of like the shampoo bottles. I take them home with me.”

The new law puts pressure on the hotel industry. Wyndham Hotels had resisted making the switch, with marketing representative Noelle Nicolai telling The Wall Street Journal in May 2018 that the little bottles, done correctly, “can be one of the top drivers of delight and guest satisfaction.” Now the chain is “working on eliminating single-use plastic,” according to a statement emailed to Stateline.

“We are exploring viable alternatives,” Wyndham spokeswoman Jane Danese said in the statement, “including, but not limited to, straws, utensils, containers and packaging to offer our owned and managed properties while ensuring a positive guest experience.”

Industry expert Harteveldt said guests’ reactions sometimes depend on the brand of shampoo and body wash

being handed out by the hotels. “If they are mainstream brands, there may be nothing special about them in terms of taking them home. But if they are premium brands ... bringing them home to use or even raiding the housekeeping cart may be part of the experience that the guests get.”

Reneta McCarthy, senior lecturer in the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, said the little soaps and shampoos are “a piece of that marketing message, the memory of that experience — maybe you have a basket in your bathroom, so when a guest comes they can choose a shampoo or whatever.”

But, she said, if the hotels save money on the little bottles, perhaps they could put that money into high-end products in larger dispensers to enhance the experience of staying in that accommodation.

Kalra said he hopes more states, cities and hotels look to California as a model. One reason some hotels signed onto the new law, he said, is that they didn’t want to have to deal with smaller jurisdictions one by one. Kalra’s legislation was modeled after Santa Cruz County’s ordinance.

The California movement inspired similar legislation in New York. Long Island

Democratic state Sen. Todd Kaminsky has introduced legislation that he hopes to pass after the legislature convenes in January. The New York bill also would go into effect in 2023 for large hotels and 2024 for hotels with fewer than 50 rooms.

Kaminsky said he also was persuaded by personal experience. “My time as a legislator in Albany requires me to stay many nights in hotels,” he said. “During the day, I was hearing about a plastic crisis in our country.” He estimated hotels in New York City alone use more than 27 million tiny plastic bottles a year, based on data from the InterContinental Hotels Group.

The World Bank reported that in 2016 about 242 million tons of plastic waste was produced worldwide, making up 12% of all municipal solid waste. Solid waste overall is expected to grow to 3.4 billion tons annually by 2050, the bank said.

After China, for decades the largest importer of used plastic, last year tightened its standards for what scraps it would accept, recycling has become harder and more cities and towns have reduced their programs.

“In light of what California has done and what we are doing, hotel chains see the handwriting on the wall,” Kaminsky

said. As for consumers, he dismissed the idea that they might suffer from “environment fatigue” with all the new anti-plastic regulations.

“The other way to look at it is that we have been polluting the waters and streams for decades and it’s not getting better; we’re using more and more single-use (plastics) every year. It will be a little disruptive, but we owe it to the planet to do this.”

But the plastics industry maintains that banning its products is not necessarily planet-saving. Tony Radoszewski, president of the Plastics Industry Association, testified to Congress just last month that some product bans force consumers to switch to something even worse for the environment.

For example, he said, California’s plastic bag ban in 2016 “led to an increase in carbon emissions due to increased paper bag usage as well as skyrocketing trash bag sales, which use more plastic.” Without the free plastic bags from stores, consumers might buy new plastic bags for uses such as lining trash cans.

He cited a January 2019 study from the University of Sydney that found when California eliminated 40 million pounds of plastic carryout bags, purchases of new plastic trash bags increased by 12 million pounds, meaning that nearly 30% of the reduction was negated by new bag purchases.

Kalra said there was brief consideration during debate on how his bill might harm homeless shelters and groups that feed, clothe and tend to those living on the street. Small bottles of soap, shampoo and other personal care items often are distributed to the homeless, who can’t carry around large containers of liquid.

Michael Ferrell, executive director of the Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, D.C., said when people donate toiletries “we certainly make use of them,” but the group also purchases small bottles in bulk, he said. He said the donations come sporadically.

“We are more likely to get them toward the end of the year or the beginning,” he said, dates that coincide with the end of holiday season giving and the end of the holiday travel period.

Kalra had another idea.

“It wasn’t lost on me that could be a concern,” he said. “Look, the hotel industry is saving a lot of money with dispensers; if they donate even a fraction of what was given to the homeless,” that could help.



# Life & Style

## Meet the man picked to be host of the 'Blue's Clues' reboot

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Joshua Dela Cruz has gone from having a genie as a sidekick to a bright blue puppy—and he couldn't be happier.

The actor is the host of a new reboot of the pre-school TV show "Blue's Clues" and hopes people who grew up on the original come to check it out with their kids.

"Now parents get to share a piece of their childhood, which is really exciting and only makes the learning that's happening onscreen that much stronger," he said.

Dela Cruz comes to Nickelodeon's "Blue's Clues & You!" after a long stint in the Broadway musical "Aladdin,"

where he understudied Iago as well as the title character and went on as Aladdin for three months.

"There was still something more that I wanted at that point. I'd been with the show for just about five years. And I wanted to use the gifts and the skills that I had learned to help someone," he said. "And my agent sent me an audition for 'Blue's Clues.'"

The original Nickelodeon show ran from 1996 to 2007, with a human host solving a puzzle by deciphering the meaning of Blue's barks and paw prints—with assistance from young viewers chiming in with their thoughts.

The reboot hews close to the original, with the return of characters like Mailbox, Thinking Chair, Slippery Soap, Shovel and of course Blue, though the pup is being rendered by computer graphics. "She is furrier, she's more lovable," he said.

Other changes include the addition of Handy Dandy Guitar and an update to Handy Dandy Notebook, which now has smartphone technology, allowing Dela Cruz and Blue to receive emails and video calls.

Former hosts Steve (Steve

Burns) and Joe (Donovan Patton) returned for the first episode to help welcome Dela

Cruz as the host. Burns helped pick Dela Cruz from an audition process that included over 3,000 hopefuls. He is the first Asian-American actor to become Blue's companion, a responsibility not lost on him.

"I was talking to my friend and they said their kid was like, 'Hey, he looks like me.' And man, that hits you like a ton of bricks," he said. "It hits you like a ton of bricks."

Traci Paige Johnson, co-



Dela Cruz

creator and co-executive producer of the original "Blue's Clues" and the reboot, helped pick Dela Cruz, purposely widening the search to include Broadway performers because they can sing and dance and endure a grueling schedule.

She and her team went to see him in "Aladdin" and were wowed by what they saw him do onstage. But they were even more impressed by what they saw offstage.

"Some kids were backstage and he was just so lovely with them, so genuine. He got down to their level and spoke to them," she said. "He just felt like the whole package."

The 30-year-old Dela Cruz thinks "Blue's Clues" is different than other shows geared toward children because it honestly asks audience members for help and it doesn't ask them to be silent consumers.

"It's more of a transfer of power and authority to the home viewer, which is something as a kid, you don't usu-

ally get," he said. "You're usually told to be quiet and listen. Our show gives us the opportunity as kids to voice our opinions and make mistakes, because that's a part of learning."

Appearing on "Blue's Clues" completes an unlikely circle for Dela Cruz, who as a youngster watched the show with his younger sister. The family didn't have cable but whenever they'd sleep over at their aunt's house, the pair would eagerly watch the blue dog. Dela Cruz even credits the catchy "Mail Song" with spurring his interest in singing.

He grew up in New Milford, New Jersey, with no intention of becoming an actor. "I had a very strong imagination growing up and I was the only boy sandwiched between two girls, so I would just kind of play by myself all the time and put myself in these wild situations and dream up these big stories."

## Baby Shark run continues with new tour dates

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Most viral videos have a finite shelf life, but the "doo doo doo" of "Baby Shark" shows no sign of abating.

The little ditty and dance about a family of sharks that captivated the toddler set and beyond will still be with us as we go into the next decade, with a "Baby Shark Live!" tour launching a new set of concert dates after recently wrapping up dozens of performances in its first run in North America. The second leg of the tour kicks off in Independence, Missouri on March 1.

"Our target demographic is 2 years old all the way up to 6 years old. That's sort of the main sweet spot. But it's family. It's a family show. It's parents with their kids. It's grandparents with their grandchildren. It's a show for the whole family," said Stephen Shaw, co-president of Round Room Live, which is putting on the concert tour. "It's a great night out. And we're really pleased with the response we've seen and how broad the actual audience has been."

And while the concert, the first for most kids, may include the earworm of "doo doo doo," the 90-minute event features music beyond that song, including nursery rhymes around for far longer than "Baby Shark."

"Baby Shark," which is obviously the title and the main song of the show, only sort of appears twice,"

said Shaw. "And the rest of the show is filled with great high-energy fun."

"Baby Shark" has been around for a few years but it took the world by storm last year when the song and video by Pinkfong went viral with the nursery-school set, with little kids imitating the handclapping dance that went along with the video. Books, plush toys and other merchandise inspired by the song were hot-ticket items for the holidays and the "Baby Shark" tour was soon hatched.

"It's one of those that has truly been a phenomenon where I think there's any number of people who suspected it might start to fade a little bit, and it seems to be gaining steam," said Jonathan Linden, Round Room Live's other co-president. "It's a lot of fun. It's a fun song that sort of brings people together and everybody seems to know it."

Getting exposure during the World Series as Washington Nationals fans adopted it as their rally song certainly helped extend that shelf life. And more "Baby Shark" is on the way as Nickelodeon has a cartoon series in the works.

Ramsey Naito, executive vice president of animation production and development for Nickelodeon, said the network sees "Baby Shark" as an opportunity to "develop bigger stories around these characters that everyone is falling in love with."

## Paul Reiser and Helen Hunt reprise '90s hit 'Mad About You'

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—Paul Reiser and Helen Hunt thought long and hard about whether to do a reboot of "Mad About You," the NBC sitcom staple of the '90s set solidly inside the Buchman family bubble.

"We had 20 years of lunches where we said, 'Absolutely never, ever.' It was the worst idea," recalled Hunt, who played Jamie Buchman to Reiser's Paul.

Reiser added during a recent interview: "It was a joke."

Time hop to Wednesday and the debut of the "Mad About You" redux on Spectrum Originals, a limited series available exclusively to the telecommunications conglomerate's on-demand subscribers.

The series ended in 1999 after seven seasons with a two-part finale that did some time hopping of its own. Janeane Garofalo played Jamie and Paul Buchman's only child, Mabel, who was seen all grown up for the first time since infancy when she narrated 22 years into the future to end the show.

The future is now. The new show picks up as an anxiety-prone Mabel (Abby Quinn) heads off to college, unraveling mom Jamie in the apartment where the Buchmans continue to live in downtown New York, just five blocks from Mabel's New York University dorm room.

It was that seamless timing, Mabel's emerging adulthood, that got the two stars thinking they could do it all over again. That and the fact that some shows in recent years have rebooted with a shred of dignity: "Will



This image released by Sony Pictures Television/Spectrum Originals shows Paul Reiser, left, and Helen Hunt in a scene from "Mad About You," a reboot of the 1990s comedy series. AP

& Grace" and "Roseanne"—turned—"The Connors," for instance.

"We did everything we wanted to do and finished," said Reiser, who created the series with Danny Jacobson. "Then we just—would we? I mean, people want us to do it. It would be crazy, right?"

Crazy but worth the risk? The original series and various cast members won a Peabody, four Golden Globes and 12 Primetime Emmys, Hunt included. Its 45-minute extended series-ending finale featuring Garofalo drew an audience of nearly 20 million households.

Reiser, Hunt and others in the original cast, including Richard Kind, John Pankow, Anne Ramsay and Cynthia Harris, picked up from a main set that's about eight miles from where the original was shot in Hollywood. Paul and Jamie's apartment is re-decorated and expanded with some of the same basic bones.

"It was totally weird until four hours in, when it was weird that it wasn't weird," Hunt said of stepping on to the new set. "I looked at Paul and went, 'Did we just take a three-month break? What's happening?'"

Gone is the original's stellar recurring cast: Mel Brooks, Carroll O'Connor and Cyndi Lauper among them, along with a slew of notable guest stars: Ellen DeGeneres, Yoko Ono and Carl Reiner, to name a few.

Also gone is their thick-headed collie mix Murray, replaced by a lanky mixed breed dog they decide to call Walter.

Spectrum's first round includes six episodes, with six more to follow on Dec. 18 as Paul and Jamie recalibrate as empty nesters.

The new series, Reiser said, "is about Paul and Jamie finding their mojo again. And how do we get back? Because we ain't the people we used to be."

Yes and no.

After hundreds of hours of couples therapy back in the '90s, Jamie decides to become a therapist herself. As for Paul, his barely off the ground documentary film career didn't happen. He's making a commercial for male catheters instead.

"We always endeavored to sound more like real life than a TV show," Reiser said. "And I think more than anyone, Helen, surprisingly, maybe surprisingly, is the one who would say, 'But it's got to be funny. Let's not forget that this is a half-hour comedy.'"

A half-hour comedy intended as friendly fare then and now, with no politics or plots tackling out-on-a-limb issues of the day. There's some cursing, and Jamie flashes a middle finger at one point on the new show, but generally it carries on old school style with Reiser's amiable bumbling and Hunt's acting chops on display.



## YA favorite Christopher Paolini writes science fiction novel

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Christopher Paolini's next book isn't only for young people.

The author of the multimillion-selling "Inheritance Cycle" has a seven-figure deal for a science fiction novel, his first adult book, Tor announced Tuesday. "To Sleep in a Sea of Stars," featuring "epic space battles for the fate of humanity," comes out

next September.

Paolini, 36, had yet to turn 20 when his debut novel, "Eragon," was released through his parents' publishing company. It was eventually acquired by Knopf Books for Young Readers, which also published "Bridgert" and "Eldest" and other works in the "Inheritance" fantasy series.

**SHOWBIZ TIDBITS****Ginsburg back on bench after stomach bug**

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is back on the Supreme Court bench after missing time last week with what the court described as a stomach bug. The 86-year-old Ginsburg climbed the three steps and took her seat for a brief court session Monday. She was absent when the justices last met in public, to hear arguments on Wednesday. Ginsburg has been treated for cancer twice in the past year, including receiving radiation for a tumor on her pancreas over the summer. She missed court sessions in January during her recovery from lung cancer surgery. Those were her first absences from court arguments in a quarter-century as a justice.

**Book about Jack the Ripper's victims wins nonfiction prize**

**LONDON (AP)**—A book that seeks to restore the humanity of the women murdered by Jack the Ripper has won Britain's leading nonfiction literary award. Historian Hallie Rubenhold was awarded the 50,000-pound (\$65,000) Baillie Gifford Prize on Tuesday for "The Five: The Untold Lives of the Women Killed by Jack the Ripper." Rubenhold shifts the focus from the killer

who terrorized London's East End in 1888—the subject of hundreds of books—to his victims. Rubenhold said they were "ordinary people, like you and I, who happened to fall upon hard times." Stig Abell, who chaired the judging panel, said the book "spoke with an urgency and passion to our own times." The award recognizes English-language books in current affairs, history, politics, science, sport, travel, biography, autobiography and the arts.

**Paul McCartney to headline Glastonbury festival**

**LONDON (AP)**—Paul McCartney has snagged the coveted Saturday night headline slot at Glastonbury next year as the British music festival celebrates its 50th birthday. Festival organizers confirmed Monday that the former Beatle will perform on the main Pyramid Stage on June 27. McCartney last played Glastonbury in 2004, delivering a set of songs covering the Beatles era, his later work solo and with Wings. The 77-year-old star tweeted: "Hey Glasto - excited to be part of your Anniversary celebrations. See ya next summer!" The festival takes over Worthy Farm in southwest England from June 24-28. The 135,000 tickets sold within an hour of going on sale last month.

## Pinkett Smith has a lot more to share with 'Red Table Talk'

**NEW YORK (AP)**—"Red Table Talk" garnered an Emmy nomination for best talk show, but Jada Pinkett Smith doesn't see it through that lens.

"I think it's more of a storytelling show. ... It's just exchanging of stories and life lessons learned from those stories," said Pinkett Smith in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "I think that might be a component that's a bit different than sitting on ... the other side of the table just asking questions. It's like we're immersed in it as a two-way communication experience."

Pinkett Smith, along with

daughter Willow and mother Adrienne Banfield-Norris, have been making headlines regularly with those conversations on their Facebook Watch show, which features both celebrity guests and regular people talking about hot-button topics. On Monday, rapper T.I. is scheduled to sit down and discuss his highly criticized comments about taking his daughter to the gynecologist to make sure she is still a virgin.

Among the more recent emotional interviews, Demi Moore discussed her memoir "Inside Out" and detailed her problems with addiction with her daughters beside her.

It was a candid conversa-

tion between the two families, but Pinkett Smith deflects any credit in getting Moore to open up even more.

"I don't think it has anything to do with me except for the fact that I'm sharing my story as well," she said.

"My family's been affected by trauma and addiction as well," referring to her mother's past trouble with addiction. "And so it's one of those episodes that is about generational healing."

Pinkett Smith and her family have shared many personal stories on Facebook Watch, and the star says she's got even more to talk about as the show goes on.

"I have a lot more transparency to go, a lot more stories to tell," she said, later adding: "I have a deep comfort level in regards to my family, and specifically, with my mother and Willow. But there's always those deeper levels because as you go, you realize you don't know yourself as well as you think. And that's real talk. And so as you go, new doors open within your psyche and you realize new things about yourself that give you new revelations on your relationships and reasons why you might have done certain things in your life. And so that's an ongoing thing. I'm discovering myself every single day."

## Kelly Clarkson on new music, family life and cruise ships

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Kelly Clarkson already has a stacked resume—singer, songwriter, talk-show host, "Voice" coach, children's book author and mother of four. Now she's adding travel to the mix.

Clarkson has been named godmother of Norwegian Cruise Line's newest ship, Norwegian Encore, and the pop star said she signed on to the project because it aligned with the things that are most important to her life: families spending time together, humanitarian work and live music.

"That's kind of where I'm at in my career. It's not just about singing. It's not just about the talk show. It's not just about being the godmother of the ship, Vegas residency or any of that stuff. It's about all of it tying together and making sense organically together," Clarkson said. "That's when I start to say 'yes' to things at this point in my career because I don't need to say 'yes' necessarily because I'm super-blessed. I say 'yes' when it fits and it makes sense with the



This April 14, 2019 file photo shows singer and actress Kelly Clarkson posing for a portrait at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles.

whole package."

Clarkson, 37, will perform at the ship's christening ceremony Thursday in Miami. She jokes about being a godmother for the first time and is excited

to finally take a vacation that suits all her children, whose ages range from 3 to 18.

"This is my first godchild. I did it right. I don't have to take care of anything. It just gives

me things—awesome," Clarkson said. "I'm super-stoked about it."

"We're a big family. It's always hard to find vacations that everybody's really into."

On NBC's "The Kelly Clarkson Show," Clarkson gave away free cruises to 20 music educators as part of her partnership with Norwegian. The new ship, which is officially launching this fall, will also have a reading room named in honor of Clarkson's daughter River Rose called the River Rose Reading Room.

"Reading is very important to our family. We do it every night with our kids. My mom is a teacher, so I definitely was a teacher's kid," she said.

Clarkson, who won "American Idol" in 2002 and immediately became a chart-topping singer, said she's surprised at the different fields that she's been able to explore in her career.

"All I did was get in trouble for talking too much," she said. "The fact that it turned into a job is kind of just ... I definitely never thought I'd be in this position."

## Friend fears for family living in piles of clutter

**DEAR ABBY:** I have a close friend who is an extreme hoarder. She and her husband have a beautiful, large, custom-built home that is stacked floor to ceiling with clutter. There are only narrow paths to walk around. Clothes, papers, toys, etc. are piled everywhere. Normally, I would mind my own business, but they have four children at home. The children are getting to the age where they are embarrassed about their home. It is so bad they can't invite friends over.

When we discuss the condition of the place with her and her husband, they get defensive and say they just don't have time. They do both work full-time, and their time off is usually spent shuttling the children to activities. Overall, they are excellent parents, and the children are loved and cared for, but the condition of their house is worse each time I see it, and they continue to buy more and more stuff. Last time I helped clear out a room, it was full of clutter a few weeks later. What can I do to help? Should I stay out of it? Should I contact CPS?

CLUTTER EVERYWHERE

**DEAR CLUTTER EVERYWHERE:** Because you say the children are loved and cared for, instead of contacting Child Protective Services, I suggest you quietly place a call to the Health Department for guidance. From your description, the

"beautiful, large, custom-built" home may be a fire hazard and possibly a danger to the family's health if there are "critters" also living in that mess. Whether their problem is the result of depression or simply gross disorganization, they do need an intervention for their children's sake.

**DEAR ABBY:** My 25-year-old daughter is getting married in about two months. Invitations have been sent out, and everything was going along pretty smoothly. However, my two older brothers, who live out of state, have informed me that neither of them will be attending her wedding. They didn't offer any reason for not attending, and money is not an issue.

My father, who has been very ill this past year with cancer, is doing everything he can to be there. My daughter had hoped that everyone could come, as it would be an opportunity for our entire family to be together, especially given my father's poor health.

Am I wrong to be upset? My brothers seem to not prioritize our family very highly. I am trying to focus on who will be there and not on who isn't. But I am afraid this isn't something I will forget.

TRYING TO SMILE IN FLORIDA

**DEAR TRYING:** Unless you have omitted some important information from your letter, has it not occurred to you that

**DEAR ABBY**

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



**your brothers' refusal may have something to do with their relationship with your father? I'm as mystified as you are about why they refused the invitation, but please don't allow their absence to cast a shadow over this happy occasion.**

**When you say you won't forget it, I hope you won't waste your precious time looking backward and carrying a grudge. Your daughter's wedding is not a command performance, and if your brothers cannot be there to appreciate the joyous occasion, so be it.**

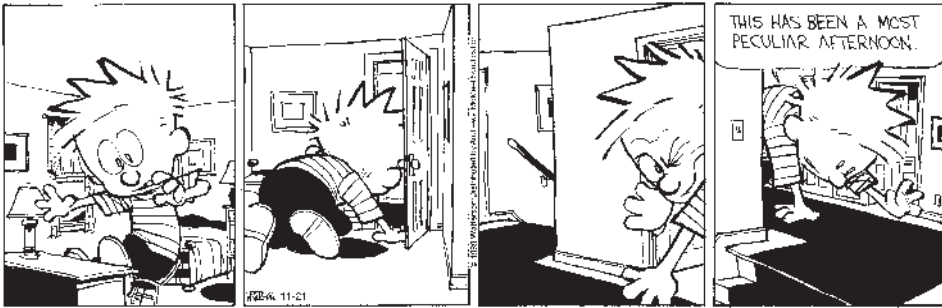
Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



Pastimes

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Garfield®

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Wild guess

5 Distant

8 Like most car radios

12 Greek vowel

13 CBS logo

14 Ashen

15 Wide smile

16 Composer Rorem

17 Pressing need

18 Ballpark snack

20 Humiliated

22 Connections

23 Spanish gold

24 Optimum

27 Stocky

32 Have debts

33 German conjunction

34 Punk rock offshoot

35 Reserve for future use

**DOWN**

1 Unuttered "alas"

2 Corrida bull

3 Bickering

4 Outlaw

5 Chinese design system

6 Nay undoer

7 Some wines

8 Beekeeper's place

9 Small monkey

10 Drifting ice

11 Repair

19 Atop

21 Carpool-lane abbr.

24 Derek and Diddley

25 Ram's mate

26 Disappointments

28 Conclusion

29 Sufficient

30 Outback bird

31 Great weight

36 Most competent

37 Away from

38 Appeared to be

41 "People" rival

42 Faux pas

43 Walking stick

44 Wise one

46 Surrealist Salvador

47 — Bator

48 Freshener scent

51 Calendar abbr.

**Solution time: 24 mins.**

**Yesterday's answer 11-21**

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Carly Rae Jepsen, 34; Jena Malone, 35; Michael Strahan, 48; Goldie Hawn, 74.

**Happy Birthday:** Keep a level head this year. Your imagination will help you come up with wonderful possibilities, but reason and responsibility will be required if you plan to come out on top. Doors will open, and the chance to use your skills and talents in unique ways will tempt you to take on too much. Be selective, and remain in control. Your numbers are 4, 10, 17, 22, 25, 38, 47.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** Don't stop dreaming. Where there is a will, there is a way to make changes that will improve your life. Work hand in hand with someone you love, and more significant opportunities will unfold. Expand your mind, improve your health and make romance a priority. \*\*\*

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Making changes to the way you approach your work or your everyday routine will make those close to you stand up and take a greater interest in what you do. Include people you enjoy spending time with in your plans. \*\*\*\*\*

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Take a moment to breathe. Don't rush something that needs more time, or you may suffer a loss. Situations will quickly get blown out of proportion if you let your emotions take over and you make invalid assumptions. \*\*

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** You need to delegate your time with care. How you get along with others will make a difference when it comes to your accomplishments. Be

open to change, but be smart enough to monitor what others do without taking over. \*\*\*\*

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Your speed and agility will pay off. Stay focused on what's important and needs to be completed, and don't waste time on unnecessary chatter that could lead to trouble. Avoid an argument, and distance yourself from unpredictable people and situations. \*\*\*

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Do the groundwork, get your facts straight and be willing to do whatever it takes to put your plans in motion. Protect against poor health or people trying to entice you into something you know isn't right for you. \*\*\*

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Take care of matters that could affect your home, personal documents or livelihood. Emotional spending will add to your stress. Stick to a minimalist lifestyle, and you'll feel much better about upcoming events, prospects and your relationship with someone special. \*\*\*

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Set up interviews, check out job listings and look for something that excites you. There is money to be made; personal changes will encourage a better lifestyle. Question what's essential and how you would like to move forward. \*\*\*\*

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** Concentrate on what you need to do to keep the peace. Avoid being trapped in someone's dilemma. Face facts, stick to the truth and make a point to avoid indulgence. Someone around you can't be trusted, so don't share personal information. \*\*

**EUGENIA LAST**

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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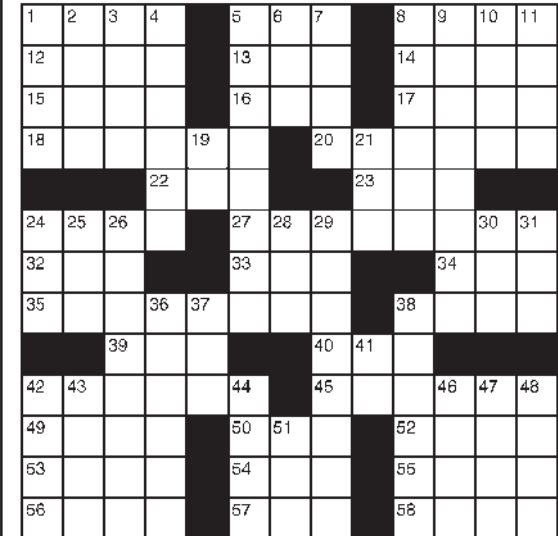
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** Look at the choices you have, the changes that are taking place and how you can use the knowledge you have to make the most of a possible opportunity. Speak up and offer ideas -- an exciting offer will come your way. \*\*\*\*\*

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Stay on top of whatever job you are given. Refuse to let the changes others make affect your life. Know when to say no and do your own thing. Don't trust someone to be fair. Emotional manipulation is apparent. \*\*\*

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Look at the possibilities before making a decision. Given the chance, someone will take advantage of you. Use your insight and intelligence when it comes to joint ventures. Show your strength of character, and you will deter interference. \*\*\*

**Birthday Baby:** You are insightful, responsible and thoughtful. You are sensitive and powerful.

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**STUMPED?** For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**SUDOKU**

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

**Yesterday's Answer**

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/21

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**WONDERWORD** By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

**FOOD WE CRAVE** Solution: 6 letters

H B C R O I S S A N T D O O F  
P A L T K I W I G N I C I L B  
T A M U A E H C H I P S A C A  
O S S B E G N I R O U V S K G  
R E T T U B U S S M C R E S E  
T G S O R R E O J R S G P H L  
I N D P B I G R N A D E E U S  
L A F P R N E E R I M G R N F  
L R F R I E D S R I A S C G Y  
A O E D T Z T F L S E P A R G  
P H D L T T Z Z U S T S O Y B  
C U A S L E E A E A S V E P R  
P S F W E H S A C L A P P L E  
D E I F S I T A S S T U N U A  
C H E E S E P A N A N A B M D

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Apple, Bagels, Banana, Blueberries, Bread, Brittle, Butter, Cake, Cashew, Cheese, Cherries, Chips, Crêpes, Croissant, Dough, Flavor, Food, Fridge, Fried, Grapes, Hamburgers, Hungry, Icing, Jams, Kiwi, Lime, Nougat, Nuts, Oranges, Pastries, Pies, Pizza, Plum, Pretzel, Pudding, Puffs, Ring, Salsa, Salt, Satisfied, Sausage, Savory, S'Mores, Soup, Sweets, Taste, Teas, Tortilla

**Yesterday's Answer: Oxygen**

To purchase the WONDERWORD MILLENNIUM SERIES #1 or #2, order online at: [www.WonderWordBooks.com](http://www.WonderWordBooks.com). (Contains 133 puzzles.)



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**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

In The Matter Of ) FCD-AD-  
the Adoption of: ) CIVIL ACTION  
K.J.R. (1/25/10) ) NO. 19-0434  
Minor Child ) **NOTICE OF HEARING**  
By: )  
**PATRICK JAMES MENDIOLA TOGAWA JR.** )  
Petitioner )

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing 12/02/2019 at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom MBP, before the Honorable Judge Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 1<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2019.

Patrick V. Diaz  
Clerk of Court  
/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
**TINIAN MUNICIPAL SCHOLARSHIP BOARD**  
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan  
P.O. Box 520059 • San Jose Village • Tinian, MP 96952  
E-Mail: tinianscholarshipoffice@gmail.com  
Telephone: (670) 433-2200 • Facsimile: (670) 433-1819

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Meeting on Sunday, November 24, 2019 at 8:00 a.m., at the PM Building, Room 104, San Jose Village, Tinian, at the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Office and Conference Room.

**AGENDA**

I. **PRELIMINARY**  
A. Call to Order  
B. Roll Call  
C. Adoption of Agenda  
D. Adoption of Minutes  
1. September 24, 2019

II. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

III. **OLD BUSINESS**  
A. Approval of DFEMS Request for Assistance  
1. Recreational Diving Training  
a. Board's Decision  
B. Approval of Disbursement for Supplemental Assistance  
1. Request for submission to the Mayor's Office

IV. **NEW BUSINESS**  
A. Review Plan to Revise TMSB Policies  
B. Plan to Reorganize TMS Office Operations  
C. Request for Assistance for 10 H.S. Students  
D. Applicant for Winter Term 2019 for Nursing Program Request for Additional Appropriations for Training Assistance Program and Vocation Education Program  
1. Tinian Delegation  
Resolutions  
E. Discontinue Training Assistance until Availability of Funds  
2. Change format of Meeting Agenda  
a. Public Comments

V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

VI. **SCHEDULE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING**

VII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

/S/ Rodney S. Charles  
Chairman

<sup>1</sup> We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments on the day of the meeting.  
<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to 1 CMC section 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.  
<sup>3</sup> Individuals with special needs requiring special accommodations, please contact the TMSB office at least 48 hours prior to schedule meeting for assistance.

**Offer to Sell Real Estate Property**

This is an offer to sell real property located in Lot. No. 3144, T.D. 397 in Rota specifically described as follow:

**Location:** Tatgua Village, Rota

**Total Area:** 5,000 sq. m. of undecided interest within this lot

**Description:** This property is in the Tatgua area, and ideal for residential or commercial development. It is conveniently located between Songsong and Sinapiao Village and about half a mile from Teteto Beach and nearby Tatgua Beach area leading to Swimming Hole.

**Price:** The highest bid received based on the Appraisal Report on September 8, 2017

Should you be interested, please let us know so we can provide you more details about the subject property as well as preferred terms and conditions of the property owner. We can also facilitate and assist you, should you wish to conduct business feasibility and due diligence on the said property.

You may contact us at email charles\_manglona@hotmail.com and mobile no 1-670-287-9877. We hope to do business with you.

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**Classified Ads**

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**CANCELLATION**

**Classified Ads**

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

**REFUNDS**

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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# Report: Strasburg could re-sign with Nationals



**WASHINGTON—** The last time Nationals fans saw Stephen Strasburg, he was standing on a stage in Washington D.C. being forced into a group hug by several teammates.

Now a free agent after opting out of the remaining four years of the extension he signed in 2016, Strasburg has put himself in a position to sign with any team he pleases ahead of next season.

But that doesn't necessarily mean he's headed out of the District. MLB.com's Mark Feinsand reported Monday that he thinks Strasburg could ink a deal with Washington before the winter meetings begin Dec. 8.

This would be a far cry from the trend demonstrated over the last two offseasons, when the biggest names waited until Spring Training to sign mega-deals—some even waiting well into the season.

"A lot of teams want Cole. A lot of teams want Rendon. I think these two guys may move faster because they're not going to have to manufacture markets for them," Feinsand said on MLB Network. "These guys are in demand. It's going to be a matter of who's willing to give them the most money, but I don't think these two players are going to be the ones who are going into deep February [unsigned]."

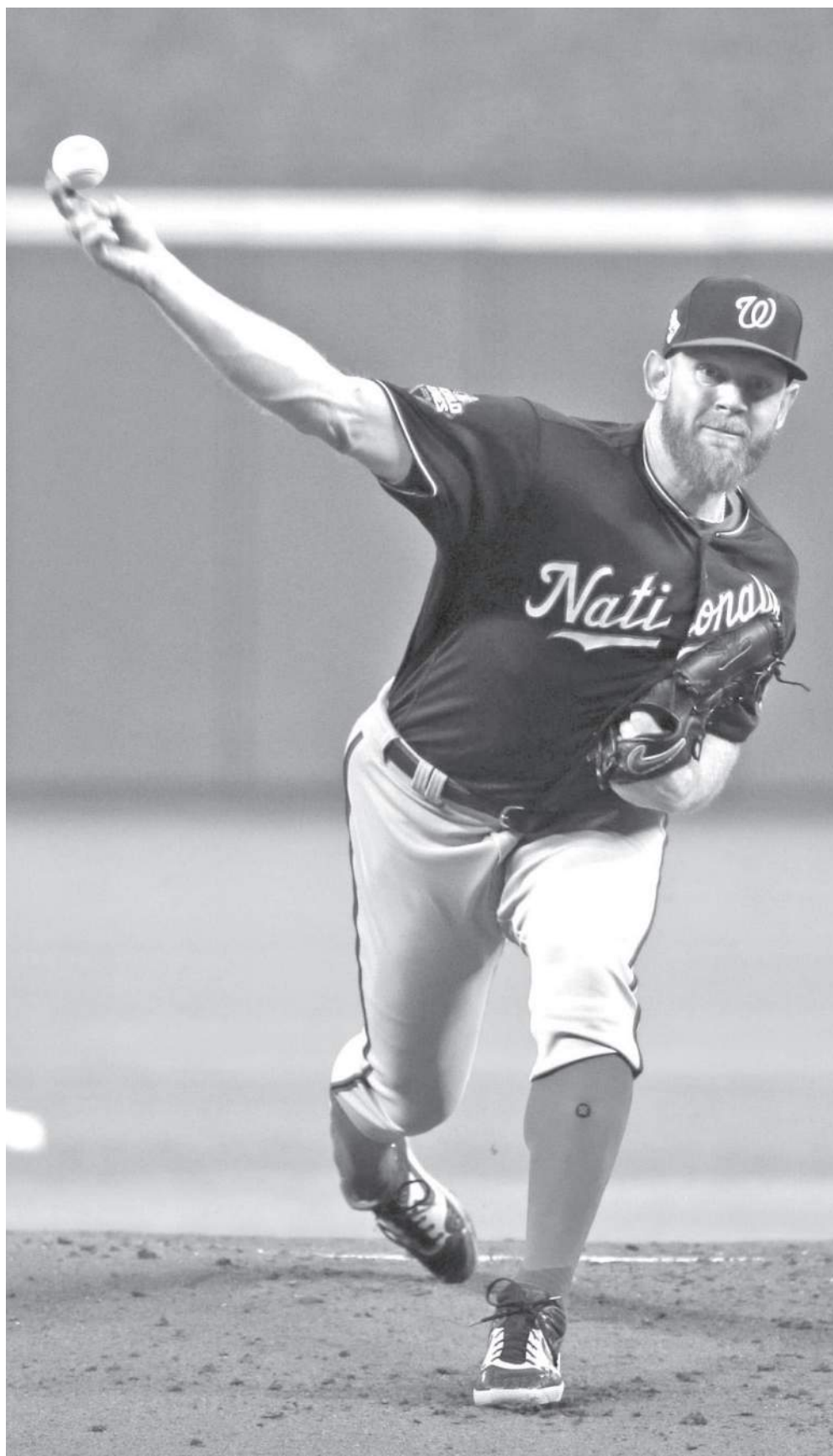
The Nationals certainly have the payroll flexibility to sign such a deal after Strasburg, Anthony Rendon and Ryan Zimmerman's significant salaries all came off the books. Signing Strasburg early would also suit Washington well, giving it the chance to modify its approach to addressing other needs accordingly while most of the other free agents are still on the market.

## Cubs open to all trade avenues

In Chicago, while Cubs fans sit on the edge of their seats waiting to see if Theo Epstein's front office trades away a core player—and which guy that might be—the question has really become more of a when.

Both because it seems likely Epstein shakes up this Cubs roster this winter and because there's natural curiosity about the timing of such a move.

If the Cubs don't get the type of return they're seeking for players like Willson Contreras and Kris Bryant, they are not going to trade just for trade's sake. But it's clear the roster needs a change and the front office has also shifted a good amount of focus on the long-term future of the organization—beyond 2021, when most of the core players are set



to hit free agency.

As for when a major trade may come down, there's really no indication on that front. The MLB Hot Stove season has taken longer and longer to get going in recent winters and that very much appears to be the case again this 2019-20 offseason as many teams—including the Cubs—have just recently finalized their coaching staff and key front office hires.

At the GM Meetings last week, the Cubs said they were in the early stages of any offseason moves and had just started to exchange names with other teams about who is and isn't available.

They're not pigeonholing themselves into any one avenue for how the winter will play out.

"Sometimes you get a feel for the marketplace or kernels of ideas and they end up coming true and you look back

and you're like, 'ah, that feel we had really matched the whole tenor of the offseason with certain teams,'" Epstein said. "Other times, you can go through a whole Russian novel's worth of twists and turns in an offseason depending on one or two player moves or clubs changing course or being able to execute things or not execute things."

"We'll see. I think the important thing is to keep a really open mind and be prepared for all different permutations of how things can work out."

As for what shape the trades may come in, be ready for anything.

The Cubs have said they still have no issues trading within the division, so even in a year where they're planning on competing in the wide-open NL Central, they're more concerned with improving

their organization in the long run than worrying about potentially making a rival better.

Epstein also said they're not afraid of acquiring a player with only one year of team control left, as long as it makes sense. But there's no reason right now for the Cubs to mortgage the future to go all-in on 2020.

"It just depends on the player and the fit and the acquisition cost, and everything else," Epstein said. "I think we're like every team—to one extent or another, we're trying to balance an immediate future vs. a longer-term future. We knew that as we got closer to the end of the period of club control with some of our best players, we had to be increasingly mindful of if you put the longer-term future rather than just the short-term."

"It's a bit of a transition for us, but it doesn't mean you

Washington Nationals starting pitcher Stephen Strasburg throws against the Houston Astros during the first inning of Game 6 of the World Series Tuesday, Oct. 29, 2019, in Houston.

rule anything out, even if it's something short-term. But you try to strike that right balance."

The Cubs also insist they're not locked into adding any one specific position or type of player. For example, they're not only looking to trade for centerfielders or leadoff guys—even if both are clear areas of need in the short-term.

## Martin, Braves agree to \$14M, 2-year deal

In Atlanta, pitcher Chris Martin and the Atlanta Braves have agreed to a \$14 million, two-year contract, a deal that brings back the right-hander after he closed 2019 with the club.

The 33-year-old Martin was acquired by Atlanta from the Texas Rangers for left-hander Kolby Allard at the July 31 trade deadline.

Martin was 1-1 with a 4.08 ERA in 20 games with the Braves. He had 22 strikeouts and one walk in 17 2/3 innings.

Martin will earn \$7 million in each year of the deal and agreed to a provision to donate \$70,000 annually to charity.

## Manfred has broad authority for Astros discipline

**ARLINGTON, Texas** (AP)—Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred hopes the investigation into sign stealing by the Houston Astros will be complete by next season and says he has authority to impose discipline beyond the loss of amateur draft picks.

Oakland pitcher Mike Fiers says that when he was with Houston in 2017, the Astros stole signs during home games by using a camera positioned in center field, The Athletic reported last week.

"Any allegation that relates to a rule violation that could affect the outcome of a game or games is the most serious matter—it relates to the integrity of the sport," Manfred said Tuesday ahead of an owners' meeting. "People want the game played consistent with our rules, and feel it's important that we figure out exactly what happened here and take steps to make sure that it doesn't happen in the future by imposing appropriate discipline."

Manfred fined the Boston Red Sox in September 2017 for using an Apple Watch to steal signals from New York Yankees catchers. At the time, only weeks before the Astros won their first World Series title, Manfred said "all 30 clubs have been notified that future violations of this type will be subject to more serious sanctions, including the possible loss of draft picks."

Loss of international signing bonus pool allocation also has been mentioned as a potential penalty.

"I'm not going to speculate on what the appropriate discipline is. That depends on how the facts are established at the end of the investigation," Manfred said. "The general warning that I issued to the clubs, I stand by. It certainly could be all

those things. But my authority under the major league constitution would be broader than those things, as well."

Manfred said for now no other teams are being investigated.

"Right now we are focused on the information that we have with respect to the Astros. I'm not going to speculate on whether other people are going to be involved. We'll deal with that if it happens," he said. "I have no reason to believe that it extends beyond the Astros at this point in time."

While there is no firm timeline for the probe, Manfred said, "I certainly would hope that we would be done before we start playing baseball again."

There has long been speculation among teams about Houston breaking rules barring electronic sign stealing. The Astros won the American League pennant again this season before losing to Washington in Game 7 of the World Series at home.

"We have over time monitored various rumors that you hear throughout the industry, made preliminary investigations, tried to satisfy ourselves that we knew exactly what's going on," Manfred said. "But certainly not with the depth and detail that came out in the article."

The commissioner spoke to reporters in a suite level hallway while taking a tour of the new Rangers ballpark, which is adjacent to the hotel where owners will meet through Thursday. The ballpark opens next season.

When asked what owners are saying about the situation with the Astros, Manfred said it was hard to characterize what they all were thinking.

"One obviously in a very different category, but the other 29 I think share my concern," Manfred said.



# Pelicans spoil Carmelo's debut, beat Blazers



**NEW ORLEANS** (AP)—Carmelo Anthony smiled easily in a hallway outside the Trail Blazers' locker room and asserted that he "felt great" after the first game of his 17th NBA season, even if his new team couldn't keep pace with Jrue Holiday, Brandon Ingram and a largely revamped Pelicans squad that is showing signs of figuring some things out.

"It felt great just to be back into the flow of the game, be back on the court, be back to where I think I belong," Anthony said. "As far as conditioning, though, I felt absolutely great out there. There was minor things, but it was more of the flow of things, and getting used to how the team plays and sets and getting used to the guys on the team."

Holiday had 22 points and 10 assists, Ingram added 21 points in his return from a four-game absence, and New Orleans beat Portland 115-104 on Tuesday night for its second straight victory and third in four games.

Anthony finished with 10 points while Portland leading scorer and four-time All-Star Damian Lillard missed his first game of the season with back spasms.

Starting at forward and playing across the street from where he led Syracuse to the 2003 NCAA championship over Kansas, Anthony scored the Blazers' first points of the game on a 3-pointer from 26 feet out. Anthony missed 10 of 14 shots, but also hadn't even participated in a full practice, having joined the team the day after its loss in Houston on Monday night.

"For having (only) a morning shootaround, I thought he was pretty good," Blazers coach Terry Stotts said. "I thought ev-



ery shot he had, he was getting a good look at the basket."

Ingram looked spry in his return from right knee soreness, particularly on an authoritative, driving, one-handed dunk that got the crowd roaring in the opening quarter.

"I think trying to get to my spots and assert myself a little bit and getting other players involved, I think I did an OK job," Ingram said. "I felt pretty good today. I didn't have any restrictions."

C.J. McCollum led Portland with 22 points, while Hassan Whiteside added 14 points and 14 rebounds.

J.J. Redick hit 4 of 9 3-pointers and scored 14 points for New Orleans. Kenrich Williams, starting at forward, filled the stat sheet with hustle plays, grabbing 14 rebounds to go with three steals, three drawn charging fouls and a blocked shot. He also scored eight points.

"He just makes winning plays," Pelicans coach Alvin Gentry said. "That's what he does—winning play after winning play."

New Orleans seized momentum in the third quarter, going up by 13 on a sequence that began when Nicolo Melli

hit a 3 and then got the ball right back in a largely vacated Portland back court after Nickeil Alexander-Walker dove to swipe the ball away from McCollum.

## Lakers 112, Thunder 107

In Los Angeles, LeBron James became the first player in NBA history to record a triple-double against every team in the league, and Anthony Davis scored 34 points during the Lakers' fifth straight victory.

James posted 25 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists to boost the NBA-leading

Lakers, who have won 12 of 13 after a perfect four-game homestand.

James is fifth in NBA history with 86 triple-doubles, but the four players in front of him—Oscar Robertson, Russell Westbrook, Lakers great Magic Johnson and Lakers assistant coach Jason Kidd—hadn't done it against 30 different teams.

Dennis Schröder scored 20 of his season-high 31 points in a phenomenal first half for the Thunder, who have lost four of five despite two solid performances at Staples Center. Danilo Gallinari added 25

points in his former home arena, and Nerlens Noel had 15.

## Warriors 114, Grizzlies 95

In Memphis, Alec Burks scored a season-high 29 points, Glenn Robinson III added 20 and Golden State snapped a seven-game losing streak with a victory over the Grizzlies.

Marquese Chriss and Eric Paschall added 17 points apiece for the Warriors. Draymond Green was just short of his 24th career triple-double with eight points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists.

Rookie Ja Morant scored 20 points for Memphis, while Dillon Brooks finished with 18. Brandon Clarke added 17 and Jae Crowder had 15 points along with 11 rebounds.

## Kings 120, Suns 116

In Sacramento, Bogdan Bogdanovic set career highs with 31 points and seven 3-pointers, and the Kings beat Phoenix.

Richaun Holmes had 20 points and 15 rebounds, Nemanja Bjelica scored 17 points and Harrison Barnes added 15 for Sacramento. The Kings have won four of five.

Devin Booker had 30 points, eight assists and five rebounds for Phoenix. Kelly Oubre Jr. and Mikal Bridges scored 20 points apiece.

Bogdanovic shot 11 of 14 overall and was 7 of 9 beyond the arc. He made four 3s and had 14 of Sacramento's 16 points during one stretch in the second quarter, then made three more from the perimeter in the fourth to help the Kings hold on.

By all accounts, Tiger Woods is exactly the type of captain anyone would expect from a man who notoriously can't sleep through the night and is known to rifle off stream-of-consciousness text messages on nearly any topic.

Since being named captain of this year's U.S. Presidents Cup team, Woods' intensity has only become more magnified. The same dedication and attention to detail that drove him to win 15 major championships is now fueling his desire to captain the same way he plays.

When he named himself one of four captain's picks earlier this month there was, predictably, no second-guessing or ambiguity. If anyone could wear both hats as a player and captain it was Tiger Woods.

Woods picks himself,

## Woods facing different dynamic as playing-captain

Finau, Woodland, Reed for Presidents Cup.

"He is our leader but he's also a part of that team in two different capacities. It's fun to watch. I think he's really relishing this spot and loves the fact that he has put together a phenomenal team," Zach Johnson said on Tuesday at the RSM Classic, the last official event before next month's matches.

Johnson, along with Fred Couples and Steve Stricker, will serve as Woods' vice captains at Royal Melbourne. It's a role that will likely bring some added responsibility with Woods opting for double duty. But when asked if Woods has started to defer some of his captain's duties

in recent weeks, Johnson said Tiger's commitment has remained resolute.

"He's still our captain. Right now, I don't think it changes. He's probably practicing a little more than he normally would if he wasn't playing, but as of right now he's still leading us, giving us topics to chew on and hash out," Johnson said. "The week of the tournament it may [change the leadership roles] a little bit."

The added responsibility promises to create a different dynamic for Woods. How, for example, will a man who has never defaulted to others when it came to major decisions adapt to two jobs that require

hyper focus?

Last month in Japan, Woods admitted as much and said it wouldn't be possible to play a morning match on Saturday when there are two team sessions because of how many decisions need to be made in real time.

"Truth be told, me, Freddie and [Stricker] may be together in the sense that we will say, 'Tiger, you've got to go play,'" Johnson said. "I say all that, but when it comes to big decisions, who's going [to play], when are they going [to play], it's ultimately his decision."

One of those decisions may be looming closer to Woods

might think. Woods named his four captain's picks two weeks ago and he might need to name a fifth pick if Brooks Koepka is unable to play.

The world No. 1 injured his left knee and withdrew from last month's CJ Cup in South Korea. Under the captain's agreement, Woods would be allowed to name Koepka's replacement if needed. It's exactly the kind of decision that Tiger's unique leadership style is suited for.

"What I'm impressed with, and this goes for Freddie and [Stricker], there is a reason why they won as captains. Tiger has always been a very cerebral guy; when it comes to making pretty important decisions it's very simple," John-

son said. "He's very concise, he's very thorough, he gets all the data and all the information and makes a decision that makes sense and goes with it. There are things that pop up, if this, then that, if this, then that. You just keep it simple."

Woods has always been famously guarded when it comes to his competitive process, but in his current leadership role he has started to give glimpses into exactly what has made him tick all these years.

In the simplest terms, it's why Johnson and those associated with the U.S. Presidents Cup team have such high expectations for this year's matches. It seems the secret sauce really wasn't that complex after all—keep it simple, prepare for all eventualities and never allow yourself to be surprised.





# US tops Cuba to reach Nations League semis

CAYMAN ISLANDS

(AP)—Five weeks after a dismal loss in Canada left the United States on the verge of elimination from the first CONCACAF Nations League, the Americans advanced to the semifinals with their second straight win and started looking ahead to World Cup qualifying next year.

Josh Sargent scored the first of his two goals 34 seconds in and Jordan Morris also had two goals Tuesday night in a 4-0 rout of Cuba at George Town. The U.S. finished 3-1 in Group A along with Canada and earned first place because of a better goal difference, plus-12 to plus-six.

"I think it's the first time in a while this team has felt something special kind of happening," Sargent said after his first two-goal international match gave the 19-year-old five goals in 12 games with the national team. "It's been a long journey. Obviously, we still have miles to go."

Qualifying for the 2022 World Cup starts with two matches each in September, October and November, followed by two games apiece in March and September of 2021. The U.S. will be joined in the six-nation hexagonal by Mexico, Costa Rica, Honduras, Jamaica and most likely Canada or El Salvador, and the top three will earn berths at the 2022 tournament in Qatar.

"We think we're moving in the right direction," Morris said. "We're just excited for the future."

Trying to rebound from its failure to qualify from the 2018 World Cup, the U.S. finished Gregg Berhalter's first



year as coach with 11 wins, five losses and two draws, a record that included a 1-0 defeat to Mexico in the CONCACAF Gold Cup final. The Americans ended an 11-match winless streak on foreign soil (six losses, five draws) dating to a 2-0 victory at Havana in an October 2016 friendly.

Quite the turnaround from a 2-0 loss at Toronto on Oct. 15, the Americans' first defeat

against Canada in 34 years.

"When I look back at 2019, I think the group has really come together nicely," Berhalter said. "We had a number of challenges in this year that the group needed to respond to, and I think we responded well. When I look at our overall goals of the year, it was to win the Gold Cup and to qualify for the semifinals of the Nations League. And we came

up short in the first one but we achieved the second one."

The U.S. plans March friendlies in Europe and will play Honduras in the Nations League semifinals in June, with Mexico meeting Costa Rica.

Cuba, outshot 20-6, finished last in the group at 0-4 and was outscored 18-0.

Recovered from a torn right anterior cruciate ligament

that sidelined him for most of 2018, the 25-year-old Morris scored in the 26th and 39th minutes. He had five goals and six assists in 14 games for the U.S. this year.

Last month in Washington, D.C., Weston McKennie scored 32 seconds in and started the U.S. to a 7-0 rout, the second-fastest U.S. goal after Clint Dempsey's score at 30 seconds against Ghana at the

U.S. forward Jordan Morris (11) overruns the ball as he tries to take a shot on goal against Canada defender Richie Laryea, left, during the second half of a CONCACAF Nations League soccer match Friday, Nov. 15, 2019, in Orlando, Fla. The U.S. played Cuba last Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2019, at the Cayman Islands and won, 4-0.

2014 World Cup.

The 23rd-ranked U.S. went ahead nearly as quickly in the second match against No. 179 Cuba despite missing five regulars because of injuries: midfielders Christian Pulisic, Tyler Adams and Michael Bradley, goalkeeper Zack Steffen and forward Jozy Altidore.

DeAndre Yedlin took a throw-in that Paul Arriola redirected toward the goal, and Sargent knocked the ball past goalkeeper Sandy Sánchez.

"Our whole mentality was to come out fast and try and get on top of them early," Morris said.

The U.S. doubled the lead when Jackson Yueill's long pass was headed on by McKennie to Morris, who controlled the ball, broke in alone, then slotted in a right-footed shot from 8 yards. The lead stretched to 3-0 when Aaron Long's cross deflected off José Almelo and came down at the goal line, where Morris stuck out his right foot to deflect the ball in for his 10th goal in 39 international appearances and fifth in five games.

Sargent got the final goal in the 66th minute when Reggie Cannon crossed and Tyler Boyd's back-heel pass left Sargent with an open left-footed shot from 6 yards.



**SAN FRANCISCO**—With a comeback victory over the Arizona Cardinals on Sunday, the San Francisco 49ers got back on track following their first loss of the season.

In so doing, the 49ers improved to 9-1 and remained atop the NFC, which features three 8-2 teams in the Green Bay Packers, New Orleans Saints and Seattle Seahawks. But Sunday's game, in which San Francisco erase a 16-0 first-half deficit thanks to a 19-point fourth quarter, also featured another rebound of great importance.

Quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo delivered a crucial performance, completing 34 of 45 pass attempts for 424 yards and four touchdowns, including a 25-yard game-winner to Jeff Wilson with 31 seconds left. Garoppolo did throw two interceptions — one off a tipped pass—but his late-

## Garoppolo claws way to redemption

game heroics greatly overshadowed those turnovers.

Garoppolo's performance carried great significance because he has represented one of the biggest question marks on the 49ers' roster. In many games this season, San Francisco has won in spite of him. The seventh-year veteran has struggled with ball security (10 interceptions and four lost fumbles), but the 49ers' dominant defense helped erase those transgressions.

On his best days, Garoppolo served as a solid offensive manager rather than the game-changing quarterback the 49ers believe he can be.

Two weeks ago, he finally seemed to put it all together, recording a 317-yard, four-touchdown outing in a 28-25 win against the Cardinals. But in the following week's 27-24 overtime loss to the Seahawks, he completed just 52% of his

passes and turned the ball over three times.

With that shaky performance, the outward questions about Garoppolo's capabilities returned. Then on Sunday, a slow start and more mistakes seemed to perpetuate concerns about the 28-year-old passer.

But Garoppolo scratched and clawed his way toward redemption, throwing the 49ers back into the game on a day when a usually potent rushing attack mustered only 34 yards on 19 carries.

That performance should further fuel the confidence of the quarterback, who still has only made 20 starts in his career.

And if Garoppolo can begin to consistently elevate his team when other facets of the game aren't operating with precision, he will only further bolster San Francisco's chances of making a deep playoff run.

### Cousins still energized

Few players found themselves under more scrutiny than Kirk Cousins during the first month of the season. The Minnesota Vikings' quarterback looked nothing like the player his team thought it was getting when he signed a three-year, \$84 million deal in 2018.

The Vikings owned a 2-2 record through September thanks largely to a strong rushing game and defense. But there were a lot of internal frustrations with Cousins and an anemic passing attack. Something clicked, however, after wide receiver Adam Thielen called out his quarterback and play-callers. Cousins has gone from whipping boy to top-level performer, throwing 18 touchdown passes and only one interception in the last seven games while leading his team to six wins in that stretch.

Sunday's game represent-

ed another clutch performance for Cousins. The visiting Denver Broncos jumped out to a 20-0 halftime lead, but the quarterback threw three second-half touchdown passes to lead his team to a 27-23 victory.

The Vikings finally are getting the kind of production and leadership out of Cousins that they badly craved. And what's even more impressive is the fact that Cousins, who boasts the second-highest touchdown total (21) in the NFL this season, has played at this level without the services of Thielen, who has missed three of the last five games because of injury and scarcely played in his Week 7 and 9 appearances.

Cousins has adopted a more aggressive mindset, but so too have his play-callers. Mike Zimmer brought in Gary Kubiak to ensure that the Vikings ran an offense that strongly emphasized the run game.

However, the initial approach taken by Kubiak and offensive coordinator Kevin Stefanski was probably more conservative than necessary.

So when Thielen and fellow wide receiver Stefon Diggs voiced frustrations over limited opportunities, the two coaches adjusted. The Vikings started dialing up more play-action pass plays, and Cousins and the offense responded favorably. After averaging 21 points per game during that 2-2 start, the Vikings have scored 29.3 points per outing in the seven games since.

At 8-3, the Vikings currently hold the second wild-card spot in the NFC. The final stretch of the season features plenty of challenging matchups, with a game at Seattle and home contests against all of their NFC North foes among them. But if Cousins and the offense can maintain this level of play, the Vikings should return to the postseason after last year's absence.



# MHS Varsity, SSHS share lead

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**  
kimberly\_bautista@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



Marianas High School Varsity and the Saipan Southern High School are currently tied for the top spot in the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Girls High School Basketball League after notching two victories each last Tuesday at the MHS Gymnasium.

The Lady Dolphins improved to a 4-0 record after prevailing over Kagman High School and Mount Carmel School, while the Lady Rays had the same perfect mark following their triumph against MHS Junior Varsity, and Agape Christian School.

MHS Varsity's pair of wins were both lopsided ones as it walloped Kagman in the first game, 34-6, and clobbered Mt. Carmel in the second, 30-6.

As for Saipan Southern, it struggled in its match opposite MHS Junior Varsity before pulling off a 16-13 win. For their second assignment, the Lady Rays had an easier time



Marianas High School Varsity's Katrina Costales, third left, looks at the basket before going for a shot against a Grace Christian Academy defender during their opening game in the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Girls High School Basketball League last week at the MHS Gymnasium.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

against Agape, 19-11.

In other results, Mt. Carmel had a split last Tuesday after outclassing Agape, 17-12, while Grace Christian Academy hammered Kagman, 18-4.

The Lady Knights are in second place in the team standings with their even 2-2 record, while GCA and Agape are tied for third and fourth with similar 1-2 slates.

## Elementary co-ed v-ball kicks off Saturday

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**  
kimberly\_bautista@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER



The 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Co-ed Elementary Volleyball Basketball Tournament will start this Saturday at the Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School and Oleai Elementary School.

The competition is for fourth and fifth graders and will run for three Saturdays with the single-elimination championship round set for Dec. 14 at the Oleai Sports Complex Field. The second phase of the tournament is scheduled for Dec. 7. Results of the first two Saturdays of the competition will be used for play-

off seeding purposes.

According to PSS Athletic Program director Nick Gross, they will have three nets available at GTC and Oleai, so games are expected to run smoothly. Each match is a race to 25 points affair with a cap of 30.

Host Oleai is in Pool B and will be playing against William S. Reyes Elementary School, Koblerville Elementary School, Saipan International School, Mount Carmel School, and Saipan Community School. Pool A has GTC, Kagman Elementary School, Garapan Elementary School, and Grace Christian Academy 1 and 2.

Meanwhile, the "middle seeds" are reserved for Rota and Tinian should they attend the championship round.

## GTC

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inside left center and kicked the ball, which Koblerville goalie Michael Etpison partially deflected, but he had butterfingers and lost the leather that eventually rolled in.

Magofna was mobbed by his teammates, as they celebrated the big shot.

After Magofna's goal, Koblerville was left with eight minutes (six minutes in regulation and two extra time) to keep its title hopes alive and had several chances to hit the equalizer and send the finale to a shootout.

The first came in the 47th minute when Jerome Mettao went for the left corner kick and the ball landed in front of Rosie Saralu after Koblerville and GTC players battled for a header. Saralu then took a shot, but her attempt was a few yards way off to the left corner post.

Two minutes after the missed opportunity, Koblerville again had a left corner kick and this time, Mettao went straight for a shot, with the ball passing over Espiritu's left shoulder and hitting the goalie's hand as he made the turn to deflect the leather, which then crossed to the right with Umangs and Binadu defenders battling for the rebound.

In the last three minutes, Koblerville made three more corner kicks with Saralu doing the honors. However, Javen Camacho deflected the ball

and kicked it out on two occasions, while Espiritu blocked it once using his body. For their final attempt to equalize the game, Mettao made the throw-in and got the ball back from Saralu's pass. Mettao then unloaded the lob, but missed his mark with the ball going way over the crossbar.

A few seconds after Mettao's attempt, the final buzzer

sounded, giving GTC the division title this season.

Joining Espiritu, Camacho, and Magofna on the Tawny Barcinas-coached champion team are Daniel Repeki, Narsan Langu, Vincent Castro, Arkin Pajarillaga, Marlaina Benjamin, Yutaka Kadokura, Terrence San Nicolas, Monette Norita, Chuck Langu, Savage Smith, Lexy Santos, and Franklin Reyes.

Camacho recorded the two other goals for GTC, earning both of them in the first half. He logged his first in the fourth minute and the second in the 26th off a penalty kick. Koblerville also registered a pair in the first half with Saralu finding the back of the net right in the opening minute of the thrilling game and Mettao lighting up the board in the 16th.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School goalie Prince Espiritu kicks the ball out, while his teammate steps into the play during their semis game against Garapan Elementary School in the 2019 NMIFA Interscholastic Soccer League last week at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville. GTC won, 7-1, and also topped Koblerville Elementary School in the finals last Tuesday, 3-2.

## SAIPAN

From Page 28

er's game, Iginoef also credits the trust that players and officials of the team share.

"It goes both ways. Without a coach who trusts his players and players who trust their coach, the team wouldn't be successful," he said.

Despite finishing the championship series early, Iginoef admitted that there was a time when he became frustrated with his squad. During Game 2, he was a bit upset, as they played sloppy and lost a double-digit lead. Saipan Vegas was on top by 10 after the first quarter, 24-14, but squandered the lead in the second and third periods.

Iginoef's wards then regained their bearings in the

fourth quarter and leaned on their full court pressure defense anew to battle back, send the game into overtime, and ultimately, take the win.

When asked about their competitor, Iginoef also had praises for IT&E.

"In Game 2, IT&E was hungry for a third game, they took the loss in the first finals game hard and they were ready to win. I give them credit for a nice championship game," he said.

Meanwhile, Iginoef thanked Saipan Vegas for sponsoring his team and also acknowledged the MIBL organizers, participating squads, and spectators.

"They brought life to basketball and they made the game great," he said.

## KANOA

From Page 28

Mary Joy Aniana drilling a pair and Katrina Costales, Kaithlyn Chavez, and Jenny Capayas contributing one apiece.

## Matansa 5, Kanoa 5

The other match in the division ended in a draw.

Jannah Casarino posted two goals for Paire, including the equalizer in the 38th minute. Julliane Hall and Lilian Podziewski recorded the two other goals for Matansa, which had an own goal in the second half.

Paulynn Joyce registered a hat trick for Kanoa, while Irish Pagarao scored two goals.

## MASTERS Matansa 6, TanHoldings

Matansa crushed TanHoldings in the second game in the masters division last Sunday.

Ivann Gozum fired four goals for Matansa, while Bunruang Brasuell and Wasana Gregory chipped in one each.

## Paire 9, Kanoa 4

Paire defeated Kanoa in the curtain-raiser in the division.

Linday Davis and Heather Taylor made two goals each for Paire, while Patricia Coleman, Tanuja Edvalson, Robyn Spaeth, Rhonda Gross, and Kimberly Ada contributed one apiece.

Manami Manglona logged all the goals for Kanoa.





**Report:  
Strasburg  
could re-sign  
with Nationals**

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# Saipan Tribune Sports

**Pelicans spoil  
Carmelo's  
debut, beat  
Blazers**

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

# GTC nips Kobler in finals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

**G**regorio T. Camacho Elementary School was crowned champion in the 2019 NMIFA Interscholastic Soccer League following a 3-2 victory in its exciting finals showdown against Koblerville Elementary School last Tuesday night at the NMI Soccer Training Center.



Ethan Magofna made the dagger for the Binadus, as he converted a cross from near left center in the 44th minute. The game



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School players and coaches pose for a photo with Northern Mariana Islands Football Association officials after receiving their awards following a 3-2 finals win over Koblerville Elementary School in the 2019 NMIFA Interscholastic Soccer League last Tuesday night at the NMI Soccer Training Center.

winner started with Magofna pushing the ball forward past the center circle and losing the possession to Jared Manah-

ane. However, Magofna recovered the ball and drove aggressively with Manahane and another Koblerville defender

chasing him. The GTC player then stopped his dribble just

**See GTC on Page 27**

## Saipan Vegas credits finals sweep to defense



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Vegas coach Greg Iginoef, left, joins his players and the team's supporters/sponsors for a group photo during the awards ceremony for the 2019 Atkins Kroll Marianas International Basketball League last Sunday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA  
kimberly\_bautista@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Saipan Vegas Aces, which ruled the 2019 Atkins Kroll Marianas International Basketball League, credits its success in the finals to the defense that the team has instilled in its players since their teens.

According to Saipan Vegas coach Greg Iginoef, many members of the champion squad trained under him since their U15 days and he drilled them continuously on full court pressure defense. Iginoef takes pride in the team's execution on



defense because it gives them the advantage over the opposing squad as Saipan Vegas players are very familiar with it.

Many Saipan Vegas members have been playing side by side for years and this contributes to the team's triumph in the in-

augural league. Saipan Vegas was undefeated in the regular season of the MIBL and swept IT&E in the finals, winning Game 1, 91-69, and Game 2, 91-89 (overtime).

Aside from their defense and familiarity with each oth-

**See SAIPAN on Page 27**

## Southern United routs Kanoa

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
roselyn\_monroyo@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Southern United Football Club proved to be too much for Kanoa after cruising to an 11-0 win in their Division B game in the 2019 Dove Women's Fall League last Friday at the TSL Sports Complex.

Keisha Deleon Guerrero towed Southern United to the easy victory after making five goals. Nathanette Blas added three, while Erin Frink and Haidee Manibusan chipped in two and one, respectively.

In the other Division B match last weekend, TanHoldings topped Shirley's, 5-1.

Audrey Castro and Julie Ann Capayas delivered two goals apiece for TanHoldings, which drew one from Rizza Relucio. Jhaz Mirano tallied the lone goal for Shirley's.

### DIVISION A TanHoldings 5, Paire 0

TanHoldings routed Paire in the curtain-raise in the division.

Four different players scored for TanHoldings with **See KANOA on Page 27**



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Southern United Football Club's Keisha Deleon Guerrero, right, takes a shot during the second half of their Division B game against Kanoa Football Club in the 2019 Dove Women's Fall League last Friday at the TSL Sports Complex.